

T H E  
S T U D E N T  
A N D  
P A S T O R:

O R,

Directions how to attain to Eminence  
and Usefulness in those respective  
CHARACTERS.

---

By JOHN MASON, M. A. *L*

---

The S E C O N D EDITION.

---

Ἐπίκει σταυτῷ καὶ διδασκαλίᾳ.

St. Paul ad Tim.

---

---

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. BUCKLAND, at the Buck, N<sup>o</sup>. 57, in  
Pater-noster-Row; and E. and C. DILLY in the  
Poultry.

80  
13

THE CANTERBURY TALES





## PREFACE.

THESE papers were originally drawn up for the benefit of a young gentleman, who was a candidate for the sacred ministry. I conceived, that, if they were made more publick, they might be of more extensive use; not only to academicks who study with a view to the pastoral office, but to those who are lately entered upon it. And what the more induced me to make them so was, that (though we have many useful treatises on this subject) I don't remember to have seen any thing in our own language so

comprehensive of the Student's and Pastor's Office, or which represents both in so short a view. *Ostervald de l'Exercise du Ministère* (which a learned and valuable friend recommended to me when I was collecting these thoughts) comes the nearest to my plan, both in method and precision, of any thing I have seen. But as that is written in *French*, and is confined to the duties of the ministerial function, without any directions in the preparatory studies, I thought it not sufficient to supersede the prosecution of my design.

The present low state of practical christianity in this nation, from the prevalence of infidelity and libertinism on the one hand, and the power of delusion and enthusiasm on the other, is never enough to be lamented by those who have the religion of the gospel at heart. And though we must expect a Divine Power to introduce a better face of things amongst us, yet how far this growing evil may be re-

## P R E F A C E.

v

pelled, or diminished, by the awakened zeal, vigilance and wisdom of pastors and preachers in their respective departments, it becomes those who have the honour to appear in that sacred character seriously to consider. At least this a powerful argument to excite their efforts to see what can be done; and to quicken them to greater diligence in the several parts of their holy function, in dependance on the divine blessing for the desired success.

And now, reader, if thou art a candidate for the sacred ministry, or already entered upon it, I would (with my sincere prayer for the divine blessing) recommend the following sheets to thy serious perusal; not as a meer speculative treatise, but as a practical *Enchiridion.*

----*Si quid novisti rectius istis,  
Candidus imperti; si non, bis utere  
mecum.*

Horace.

1744

THE



# THE CONTENTS.

## PART. I.

### CHAP. I.

**O**n the right distribution and management of our time, page 3

### CHAP. II.

*The way to read authors to advantage,*  
p. 11

### CHAP. III.

*How to study to advantage,* p. 19

### CHAP. IV.

*The method of collecting and improving useful thoughts from conversation,* p. 28

### CHAP. V.

*Concerning the improvement of our thoughts when alone,* p. 35

PART

## The C O N T E N T S.

### P A R T. II.

#### C H A P. I.

*Of composing of sermons,*                    p. 43

#### C H A P. II.

*General rules relating to preaching,* p. 58

#### C H A P. III.

*Of the duties immediately previous to the work of the pulpit,*                    p. 72

#### C H A P. IV.

*Of pulpit elocution,*                    p. 77

#### C H A P. V.

*Of prayer,*                                    p. 87

#### C H A P. VI.

*Concerning the administration of the sacraments,*                                    p. 106

#### C H A P. VII.

*Of visiting the sick,*                            p. 118

#### C H A P. VIII.

*Concerning the minister's conduct towards his people.*                                    p. 130

#### C H A P.

## The C O N T E N T S.

### C H A P. IX.

*Concerning the difficulties a minister must expect to meet with in the execution of his office; and his proper support and encouragement under them,*

p. 159





## THE

# STUDENT and PASTOR.

---

## PART I.

H E that devotes himself to the work of the sacred ministry, should be continually intent on two things, viz. the improvement of his own mind, and the mind of others, in the most important and useful knowledge.

This comprehends the whole office of a Student and Pastor.

The business of a Student is, to be so employ'd, as to be continually making some valuable accessions to his own intellectual furniture. To which five things are necessary. (1) A proper distribution and

B manage-

2            *The Student and Pastor.*

management of his time. (2) A right method of reading to advantage. (3) The order and regulation of his studies. (4) The proper way of collecting and preserving useful sentiments from books and conversation. (Lastly) The improvement of his thoughts when alone.



C H A P.



## C H A P. I.

### *Of the right distribution and management of our time.*

**A** Student should be as frugal of his time, as a miser is of his money; should save it with as much care, and spend it with as much caution: ‘To be careful how we manage and employ our time is one of the first precepts that is taught in the school of wisdom, and one of the last that is learnt. And ‘tis a prodigious thing to consider that although, amongst all the talents which are committed to our stewardship, time (upon several accounts) is the most precious, yet, there is not any one of which the generality of men are more profuse and regardless. Nay ‘tis obvious to observe, that even those persons who are frugal and thrifty in every thing else, are yet extremely prodigal of their best revenue, time; of which alone (as Seneca nobly observed,) ‘tis a virtue to be covetous.’

‘ *vetous* (a).’ And ‘tis amazing to think how much time may be gained by proper œconomy (b): and how much good literature may be acquired, if that gain be rightly applied. To this purpose, let the following rules be observed.

1. Take particular notice of those things which are most apt to rob you of your time. Upon such an inquest, you will probably detect the following thieves (c.)

1. The bed. Never allow yourself above six hours sleep at most. Physicians all tell you that nature demands no more, for the proper recruits of health and spirits. All beyond this is luxury; no less prejudicial to the animal constitution than intemperate meals; and no less hurtful to the powers of the mind, than to those of the body. It insensibly weakens and relaxes both.

2. Ceremonious and formal visits. They may sometimes be necessary; but if they can’t

(a) *Norris’s Miscel.* p. 118.

(b) *Ad summa perveniet nemo, nisi tempore, quo nihil esse fugacius constat, prudenter utatur.* Ringel. de Rat. Stud. p. 100.

(c) *O fures, O latrones, O tyrannos crudelissimos quorum consilio mihi unquam periit Hora!* Id p. 104.

can't be improved to some useful purpose, the shorter they are the better. Much of this time is spent to no purpose, and 'tis to be feared not a little of it to bad purpose.

3. Indolence is another thief of time. Indulging to a slow, heavy, unactive disposition; delaying, or deferring necessary business to a future time, which ought to be set about immediately; idle musing, or indulging to vain, chimerical imaginations. This is very natural to some, and as unnatural to others; and commonly leads to another, and greater waste of time, viz.

4. Sloth and idleness. No man takes more pains than the slothful man. Indolence and ease are the rust of the mind. No habit grows faster by indulgence, exposes to more temptations, or renders a man more uneasy to himself, or more useless to others (d).

5. Reading useless books. And those books may be called useless to you, which

B 3 you

(d) Quædam tempora eripiuntur (sc. negotiis) nobis, quædam subducuntur (amicis), quædam effluunt (inertia): turpisima tamen est jactura quæ per negligentiam venit. Sen. Ep. 1.

## 6      *The Student and Pastor.*

you either do not understand; or if you do, afford neither solid improvement, nor suitable entertainment. And especially pernicious books, or such as tend to give the mind a wrong turn, or bad tincture.

6. Much time is often lost by a wrong method of studying, and especially by applying to those branches of learning which have no connexion with the great end you propose. Why should a divine affect the civilian? or dive into the depths of politicks? or be ambitious to excel in the abstrusest parts of mathematical science? He has spent much time and labour in these disquisitions, and at last gained his point. But, after all his expence, what is he the better preacher, or the better man? In every undertaking (especially when we enter upon a new course of study) we should remember the *Cui Bono*; and ask ourselves, how far this is like to improve our usefulness, or add to our reputation, under that character we are about to sustain, and wherein we aim at some degree of distinction?

Lastly, Much time is lost by an unnatural bent of the mind to a study to which it is not disposed; or by which the faculties are already fatigued, it will find

find great relief by a change of employment. A man that rides post to save time would not chuse to be always spurring a jaded horse, but will rather change him for a fresh one, whereby he makes a speedier progress, with more ease to himself. *Nil invitâ Minervâ.* The activity of the mind is so great, that it often finds more relief and refreshment by turning to a new track of thinking, different from that it was tired in, than it does from a total relaxation of thought in mere bodily exercise; which shews that 'tis not labour that tires it, so much as a dull uniformity of employment; since it is more refreshed by variety than rest (e).

2. Let your most precious time (viz. that wherein the thoughts are most composed and free) be sacred to the most serious and important studies. Give the morning to composition; or the reading some valuable author of antiquity with whom it is worth your while to be well acquainted. The afternoon will suffice for his-

(e) *Pòst Lectione seu stylo defessus nihil nitor repugnante naturâ: sed exercitii genus aliud quæro, quo tædium varietas minuat.* Rin, de Rat. Stud. p. 110.

tory, chronology, politicks, news, travels, geography, and the common run of pamphlets: and let books of entertainment amuse a dull hour, when you are fit for nothing else. To apply your early time, or fresh thoughts to these, is like drinking wine in a morning: and giving too much of our time and thoughts to them, is like drinking the same intoxicating liquor to excess, and will have the same effect on the mind, as that has on the body.

3. Remember to be always before-hand with your business, *Post eft occasio calva.* Whatever must be done, and may be done now as well as hereafter, for that very reason had better be done now. This is a prudent maxim in life, applicable to a thousand cases; and of no less advantage to a student, than a tradesman. Defer nothing to the very last, lest some intervening accident should prevent the execution of an important purpose; or put you into a hurry in the prosecution of it. And what is done with precipitance and haste seldom succeeds so well, or is executed with that accuracy and discretion, as what is the effect of more mature and deliberate

deliberate thought. A traveller that must reach his home in a given time, would not be thought discreet, if by loitering at the beginning of his journey, he is forced to run himself out of breath at the end.

4. That time is not lost, but improved, which is spent in those exercises which are necessary to invigorate and strengthen the faculties for harder work; or to preserve a good state of health and spirits; as eating, drinking, sleeping, physick, bodily exercise, recreations, and the like. Because through a neglect of these, a student may contract a bad habit of body, or mind; or so far impair his constitution as to render him a long time unfit for useful service. But (*Est modus in rebus, &c.*) and excess of these things defeats their end, and is as prejudicial to health, as a discreet and moderate use of them is conducive to it (f).

B 5

Lastly.

(f) Such diversions as his (viz. the clergyman's) health or the temper of his mind, may render proper for him, ought to be manly, decent and grave; and such as may neither possess his mind or time too much, nor give a bad character of him to others. His cheerfulness ought to be frank, but neither excessive nor li-

10      *The Student and Pastor.*

Lastly. Enter upon nothing, but what you are determined to pursue and finish. Much time is often lost by vain attempts, and leaving useful designs imperfect. For as he who begins to build a house, but never compleats it, must set down to his loss the greatest part of his money thus expended: So a student who desists from a work (*re infectâ*) wherein he has taken much pains, is chargeable with as fruitless an expence of his time, as the other is of his money (g).

centious. His friends and his garden ought to be his chief diversions, and his study his chief employment.  
—Burnet's Disc. of the Past. Care, ch. viii.

(g) If you are writing a book, or engaged in any work which requires much time and pains to execute, lay it down as a rule, to let no day pass without putting a hand to it. *Nulla dies sine linea*, will carry you (like a steady traveller) a vast length in one year.

C H A P.



## CHAP. II.

*The way to read authors to advantage.*

**A** Student should be as careful what books he reads, as what company he keeps. They both leave the same tincture on the mind.

1. Don't read indiscriminately ; nor indulge a curiosity of perusing every new book that comes out ; nor desires to read it 'till from the known ability of the author, or the information of some judicious friend, you know 'tis worth your reading.—The curiosity of *Vanillus* to be personally acquainted with men and their characters, leads him into all company when he is at *Bath* ; and when he hears of a new stranger he is uneasy 'till he knows him, and is able to give others a description of his person, equipage and family. By this turn of temper *Vanillus* loses much time, which would be more agreeably and profitably spent in the conversation of a few select friends. He knows men, but not human

human nature—There is a wide difference between a man of reading, and a man of learning. One can't read every thing; and if we could, we should be never the wiser. The bad would spoil the good, fill our minds with a confused medley of sentiments, and desires, and the end of reading would be quite defeated for want of time and power to improve and practice. A man that eats of every dish at table, overloads his stomach, is sick, and digests nothing. He had better have fasted (h).

2. Lay aside the fruitless inclination of reading a trifling author quite through, in hopes of finding something better at the end. You are sure of finding something better in another on the same subject. Therefore lose not a certainty for the sake of a mere possibility. Why should you confine yourself to listen to the impertinence of one man, when by only turning your back, you may be entertained and improved by the more pleasing and instructive conversation of another?

3. Ob-

(b) *Distrahit aninum librorum multitudo—*  
*Fastidientis stomachi multa degustare, quæ ubi varia sunt & diversa inquinant, non alunt.* Sen. Ep. 1.

3. Observe the characteristical beauties of your author. Every good writer has his peculiar felicity, his distinguishing excellence—Some excell in style; entertain us with easy, natural language; or with an elegance and propriety of expression; or delight us with their florid, smooth, and well-turned periods. Some love a figurative, diffuse and flowing style. Others quite a plain, rational, discursive one. Each have their excellence. But the most elegant is that which is most natural, proper and expressive; it can't then be too short and plain, both to *delight* and *instruct*; the two great ends of language. A style overloaded with studied ornaments grows prolix; and prolixity always weakens or obscures the sentiment it would express. No decorations of well-chosen words, or harmony of cadence can atone for this fault. Such a style is like a lady who, in adorning her person, spoils a good shape by a tawdry dress, and a fine face by paint and patches. And both proceed from the same affectation, in preferring the embellishments of art to those of nature, whose charms are infinitely more powerful and pleasing.—Others excel in sentiments.

sentiments. Those sentiments strike us with most pleasure, that are strong, or clear, or soft, or sublime, pathetic, just, or uncommon. Whatever has the most weight and brevity finds the quickest way to the heart.—Others excel in method; in a natural disposition of the subject, and an easy, free, familiar way of communicating thoughts to the understanding. Nothing is very striking. You approve and are well pleased with your author, and you scarce know for what. This resembles the *Je ne scay quoy, tout agreeable*, in the very humour, turn and air of some people we converse with.—Others are very happy in their manner and way of conveying clear, rational, solid arguments, and instructions to the mind, which arrest your attention, command your approbation, and force your assent at once. You see every thing in broad day, in a fair, and strong and proper light. A perfect writer has all these excellencies of style, sentiment, method and manner united. A judicious reader will observe in which of them his author most excels.

4. From all your authors chuse one or two for your model, by which to form your style and sentiments, and let them be your *Enchiridia*, your pocket-companions. Consult and imitate them every day, 'till you are not only master of their style and sentiments, but imbibe their spirit. But be very cautious both in your choice and imitation, lest with their excellencies you adopt their faults, to which an excessive veneration for them may make you blind (i).

5. If your author have an established reputation; and you don't relish him, suspect your own taste and judgment. Perhaps something has biased your mind against him: find it out and compare it with those beauties which charm his other readers more than all his blemishes offend them (k). Or perhaps you do not

under-

(i) *Certis ingeniiis immorari et innutrirī oportet, si velis aliquid attrahere quod in animo fideliter redeat — probatos itaque semper lege, et siquando ad alios divertere libuerit, ad priores redi.* Sen. *Ibid.*

(k) — *ubi plura nitent in carmine, non ego paucis Offendar maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,  
Aut humana parum cavit natura.*

— Hor. *de Art. Poet.* l. 350.

understand him; then 'tis no wonder you don't admire him. If your judgment be good, 'tis a sure sign your author is so, when the more you read him the more you like him. A good friend and a good book are known by this; they grow in your esteem as you grow in acquaintance with them.

When you meet with such an author on any subject, flick by him, make yourself master of him. You will discover new beauties in him every time you read him, and regret not that you are unread in the common rubbish. Some books better deserve to be read through ten times than others once (1).

6. Before you sit down to a book taste it; i. e. examine the title-page, preface, contents and index; then turn to the place where some important article is discussed: observe the writer's diction, argument, method and manner of treating it. And if after two or three such trials you find he is obscure, confused, pedantic, shallow or trifling, depend upon it he is not worth your reading.

Lastly.

(1) —decies repetita placebunt. Juv.

Lastly. If the book be your own, make marks at the margin against those passages where the sentiment is well conceived or expressed, and worth your remembering or retailing; or transfer it into your common-place book, under the head your author is treating of; or at least a reference to it (m).—In reading an antient Latin or Greek author, it will be a help to the memory to transcribe the passages that struck you most, in the spare leaves at the beginning or end of the book, in English; and, by thus skimming off the cream, you will have it always ready for use. If you meet with a happy expression or even one well-chosen word on any subject, which you may have occasion to use, (and wish it might occur to you when you are at a loss for expressions) mark it, and make it your own for ever (n).—Thus

you

(m) *Inter legendum authorem non oscitanter observabis, si quod incidat insigne verbum, si quod argumentum, aut inventum acutè, aut tortum aptè, si qua sententia digna quæ memoriæ commendetur: isque locus erit aptâ notulâ quapiam insigniendus.*  
Erasm. de Rat. Stud.

(n) *Quanto pluris feceris exiguum proventum, tanto ad altiora doctrinæ vestigia es evasurus. Qui vilissimos.*

you will read with taste and profit, and  
avoid the censure which falls upon——

*A bookish blockhead, ignorantly read  
With loads of learned lumber in his  
head.*

vilissimos quosque nummos admirantur, intuentur  
crebro, et servant accuratè, ad summas sæpenumero  
divitias perveniunt; pari modo, si quis aptarit su-  
dorum metam benè scribere, discat mirari bene scrip-  
ta, discat gaudere, si vel nomina duo conjunxerit  
venustè. Rin de Rat. Stud. p. 111.





## CHAP. III.

### *How to study to advantage.*

HERE we must consider both the subjects and method.

As to the subjects of your study.

Consider what will make you most eminent and useful in your profession (o): This kind of study is to be your serious business, and daily and diligently prosecuted. In all your reading keep this point in view. A traveller should have his right road and the end of his journey always in his eye, whatever little diversions

(o) *Quisquis verbum Domini statuit sincerè prædicare, perpetuus et assiduus sit oportet in sancti propositi meditatione, ut sibi constent omnia vitæ studia.*  
Eras. Eccl. p. 6, 7.

Quemadmodum enim non inscitè dixit quidam,  
tum eruditum appellandum esse, non qui didicerit  
plurima, sed qui optima maximaque necessaria; ita  
non est necesse ut futurus Ecclesiastes in quibuslibet  
consumat operam atque ætatem—sed ea primum  
ac potissimum discat quæ ad docendi munus sunt ac-  
commodatissima. Id. p. 92, 93.

fions or excursions he may indulge by the way. You may sometimes be, *Nescio quid meditans nugarum*, but don't be *totus in illis* (p).

To an acquaintance with books join the study of human nature. Your own heart, passions, temper, humour, habits and dispositions, will be the books you have most need to consult on this subject (q). For human nature in the main strokes of it, is much the same in all the human species (r)—Next to this, your observations on the ways and characters and tempers of men, will be of great help to you; together with some books where human nature is strongly and finely painted, in its various shapes and appearances.

'Tis not beneath the Christian philosopher to take some pains to be acquainted with the world; or the humours, manners, forms, ceremonies, characters and customs

(p) Hor. Sat. L. 1. S. 9.

(q) Vid. Self-knowledge. Part. 1. chap. 9—11.

(r) Les hommes sont à-peu-pres tous faits de la même maniere; et ainsi ce qui nous a touché, les touchera aussi. Ostervald de l'exercice du Ministère. p. 134.

customs of men: at least so far, as is necessary to avoid singularity and a disagreeable awkwardness, and to preserve a *decorum*, and an easy address in all company.

A student should not think any thing unworthy his attention and notice, that has a tendency either to make him more agreeable, or more useful to others. Some regard is therefore due to dress, behaviour, the usual forms of civility, and whatever contributes to the art of pleasing. Among these I would particularly recommend a habit of expressing his sentiments freely and properly upon any subject. Let his style and language be studied principally with this view.

As to the method of studying to advantage.

Pray for a divine blessing on your studies; that God would guide you into the most useful knowledge and all important truths; direct your subjects, and assist your meditations upon them.

Procure a collection of the best and most approved books, which treat of the sciences you chiefly desire to cultivate,  
and

and make yourself master of them in the way before prescribed.

Consult your own genius and inclination in the study you intend to pursue: You will else row against the tide, and make no progress that is either comfortable, or creditable to yourself.

Compose your spirits, fix your thoughts, and be wholly intent on the subject in hand. Never pretend to study whilst the mind is not recovered from a hurry of cares, or the perturbations of passion. Such abrupt and violent transitions is a discipline to which it will not easily submit, especially if it has not been well managed, and long accustomed to it. *Aurora musis amica, necnon vespera:* Because the mind is then commonly most free and disengaged.

Let the scene of your studies, be a place of silence and solitude; where you may be most free from interruption and avocation.

When you have a mind to improve a single thought, or to be clear in any particular point, don't leave it 'till you are master of it. View it in every light. Try how many ways you can express it, and which

which is the shortest and best. Would you enlarge upon it; hunt it down from author to author: Some of which will suggest hints concerning it, which perhaps never occurred to you before: and give every circumstance its weight. Thus by being master of every subject as you proceed, though you make but a small progress in reading, you will make a speedy one in useful knowledge. To leave matters undetermined, and the mind unsatisfied in what we study, is but to multiply half notions, introduce confusion, and is the way to make a pedant, but not a scholar.

Go to the fountain-head. Read original authors, rather than those who translate or retail their thoughts. It will give you more satisfaction, more certainty, more judgment, and more confidence, when those authors are the subjects of conversation, than you can have by taking your knowledge of them at second hand. It is trusting to translations, quotations and epitomes, that makes so many half scholars so impertinently wise.

Finally. Be patient of labour. The more you accustom yourself to laborious thinking,

thinking, the better you will bear it. But take care the mind be not jaded (s).

If divinity be your peculiar study, observe the following rules.

1. Be critically expert in the original Scriptures of the Bible, and read a chapter in Hebrew, and another in Greek every day. And especially observe the different senses in which the same original word is used by the same author: This often throws a great light on his meaning.

2. When you have found what you take to be your author's own sense, keep to that, and admit of no vague, uncertain or conjectural constructions, whatever doctrine they may discountenance, or favour.

3. Be

(s) Socrates ille non hominum modo, verum etiam Apollinis oraculo, sapientissimus judicatus, et perennis Philosophiae Fons, dicere solet: 'Radicem quidem eruditionis peramarum esse, sed fructum habere jucundissimum; initioque magnos adferre labores, sed honestissimum sudantibus præmium reponere.' Ergo, O Tu, quisquis es, cui ignea vis in pectore exarsit, cui flamma in præcordiis micat, procul absint mollia, lenia, facilia, blanda, quæ animi impetum extinguere solent. Dura petamus, &c. Vid. Ringelbergius de Ratione Studii. p. 13.

3. Be sure to make the sacred Scripture the source, standard and rule of all your theological sentiments. Take them from it, bring them to it, and try them by it.

4. Make yourself master of some short well chosen system of divinity, for the sake of method and memory; but take care, (*Nullius in verbum jurare magistri*) that you be not swayed by the credit of any human names in matters of divine faith. Let reason, evidence and argument, be the only authorities to which you submit. Remember 'tis truth you seek; and seek her (as you would do any thing else) in the place where she is most likely to be found.

5. Divest yourself as much as possible of all prepossession in favour of, or prejudice against, any particular party-names and notions. Let the mind be equally balanced, or it will never rightly determine the weight of arguments. Prejudice in one scale will outweigh much solid truth in the other: And under such a prepossession, the mind only observes which balance preponderates, not what it is that turns it.

6. Cultivate a proper sense of the imbecillity of the human mind, and its proneness to error, both in yourself and others. This will guard you against a dogmatical confidence in defence of your own opinions, and arm you against the influence of it in others. And, on the contrary, endeavour after a meek, humble, teachable temper; which, from the highest authority, we are sure, is the best disposition of mind, to seek and receive divine truth (*t*).

7. Be not fond of controversy. Theological altercations have in all ages been the bane of real religion, and the fatal source of unknown mischief to true Christianity. It fours the temper, confounds the judgment, excites malevolence, foments feuds, and banishes love from the heart: and in fine, is the devil's most successful engine to depreciate and destroy the principles of vital piety. — Let the controversies you read be the most important, viz. those against the *Deists* and *Papists*. And read only the best authors upon them. Among whom you will

(*t*) Ps. xxv. 9.

will find none to exceed the late bishop of *London* and Dr. *Leland* in the former, and Dr. *Tillotson* and *Chillingworth* in the latter.

8. Avoid theological minutenesses. Lay no stress on trifles: As you see many do, either from a wrong education, or a weak turn of mind. Reserve your zeal for the most important subjects, and throw it not away upon little things.

Lastly. Let none but the best writers in divinity be your favourites. And those are the best writers, who at once discover a clear head and a good heart, solid sense and serious piety, where faith and reason, devotion and judgment, go hand in hand.





## C H A P. IV.

*The method of collecting and preserving useful thoughts from conversation.*

WHENEVER it can be done without affectation and pedantry, turn the conversation on the subject you have been reading last, if you know it to be suitable to your company; and introduce your maturest observations upon it. This will fix it in your memory, especially if it becomes matter of debate (u). For the mind is never more tenacious of any principles, than those it has been warmly engaged in the defence of. And in the course of such debate you may perhaps view them in a new light; and be able to form a better judgment of them, and be excited to

(u) *Quicquid didiceris id confessim doceas; sic et tua firmare, et prodeesse aliis potes. — Ea doce quæ noveris, eaque diversis horis, aliis atque aliis conveniet inculcare. Satis sit, si quispiam te audiat, interea exercitio miram rerum copiam tibi comparaveris.*  
*Ringel. de ratione Studii, p. 28, 56.*

to examine them with more care. Intercourse awakens the powers, whets the mind, and rubs off the rust it is apt to contract by solitary thinking. The pump for want of use grows dry, or keeps its water at the bottom, which will not be fetched up unless more be added.

When you have talked over the subject you have read, think over what you have talked of; and perhaps you will be able to see more weight in the sentiments you opposed, than you were willing to admit in the presence of your antagonist. And if you suspect you was then in an error, you may now retract it without fear of mortification. That you may at once improve and please in conversation, remember the following rules.

1. Chuse your company, as you do your books. And to the same end. The best company, like the best books, are those, which are at once improving and entertaining (x). If you can receive neither pleasure nor profit from your company, endeavour to furnish it for them.

C 3

If

(x) *Ille tulit punctum, qui miscuit utile dulci.*

*Hor. de Arte Poet. l. 343.*

If this can't be done, (and especially if there be danger of receiving hurt from them) quit them, as decently as you can.

2. Study the humour of your company, and their character. If they be your superiors, or much inclined to talk, be an attentive hearer. If your inferiors, or more disposed to hear, be an instructive speaker.

3. When the conversation drops, revive it with some general topick, by starting a subject on which you have some good things to say, or you know others have. To which end it will not be amiss, to be a little prepared with topicks of conversation, suitable to the company you are going into: and the course of your own thoughts in conversation, will be more free, than you ordinarily find them to be in silent meditation.

4. When any thing occurs that is new, or instructive, or that you are willing to make your own, enter it down in your minute or common-place book if you cannot trust your memory, (for in conversation all are free-booters; whatever you lay your hand on that is worth keeping, is lawful prize,) but take care that

that you do not charge either the one or the other with trash.

5. Never stand for a cypher in company, by a total silence. It will appear boorish and awkward, and give a check to the freedom of others. 'Tis ill manners. Better say a trivial thing than nothing at all. Perhaps you hear a deal of impertinence, uttered by some in the company, which you candidly excuse: presume upon their candour, if you happen to talk in the same manner. You have a right to claim it: you will readily receive it. Something trite and low uttered with an easy, free, obliging air, will be better received than entire silence; and indeed than a good sentiment delivered in a stiff, pedantick, or assuming manner. And many good things may arise out of a common observation. However after a dead silence, it will set the conversation a going, and the company, who want to be relieved from it, will be obliged to you. This is a secret that will never fail to please.

6. Join not in the hurry and clamour of the talk, especially when a trifling point is disputed and several speak at once, but be a patient hearer, till you have made

C 4 your-

yourself master of the subject and the arguments on both sides. And then you may possibly find an opportunity to put in as mediator, with credit to your judgment.

Repeat not a good thing in the same company twice, unless you are sure you are not distinctly heard the first time.

7. Though you may safely animadvert upon, yet do not oppose, much less rally the foibles or mistakes of any one in the company ; unless they be very notorious, and there be no danger of giving offence. But remember that he himself sees the matter in a different light from what you do, and with other eyes.

8. If detraction or prophaneness mingle with the conversation, discountenance it by a severe, or a resolute silence, where reproof would be thought indelicate. If this be not sufficient to put a stop to it, make no scruple to withdraw (y).

#### 9. Affect

(y) Posidonius relates of St. Austin, that this Latin distich was inscribed on the table where he entertained his friends.

Quisquis amat dictis absentem rodere amicum,  
Hanc mensam indignam noverit esse sibi.

9. Affect not to shine in Conversation, especially before those who have a good opinion of their own understanding. The surest way to please them, is to give them opportunity to shew their parts; a monopoly of this kind will scarce ever be endured with patience (2).

10. Bear with the impertinence of conversation. Something may be learned from them, or some opportunity may be given you to put in a sentiment more *à propos*. Besides, what appears low and flat to you, may not to another (a).

C. 5 Lastly.

(z) Conversation is a sort of commerce, towards which every one ought to furnish his quota, i. e. to hear and speak in his turn. 'Tis acting against the rules of honesty, and laws of commerce, to monopolize all, and deprive others of the share they have in the gain. 'Tis in like manner, a kind of injustice in those who compose the circle, always to usurp the talk. If your design by it is to make a shew of your parts, and to procure esteem, you quite mistake your interest; for you exasperate those against you whom you thus force to silence, who can't bear the ascendant you give yourself, and the degree of superiority you assume. Reflect, upon ridicule, vol. 1, p. 55.

(a) That which makes common conversation so nauseous, are the applauses bestowed on follies. Narrow souls admire every thing, and cry up the least trifles.

Lastly. Appear perfectly free, friendly, well-pleased, easy and unreserved. This will make others so; and draw out many a good thought from them. And is much more pleasing than a studied politeness, and all the usual arts of common place civility (b).

trifles, that ought to be let pass. That which becomes a well-bred man on these occasions, is to say nothing. It would be a criminal complaisance to applaud offensive fooleries. It would be likewise a faulty delicacy, to bear with nothing but what is exquisite, and to express contempt for every thing that is flat and trivial. *Idem*, p. 346.

(b) However it is extolled as the great art of conversation, to appear with the utmost openness and civility when you are most upon the reserve: Yet, as it is not only the ordinary dress of courtiers, and travellers, but an art that frequently belongs to the shops, the covering is much more transparent, than they who act under it are apt to think. And besides, such an address is really nauseous amongst friends; and the greatest masters of this artful smoothness, seldom deceive others thereby, so much as themselves. *Vid. Advice to a son*, p. 31.



CHAP. V.

*Concerning the improvement of our thoughts when alone.*

**A** Student (like a philosopher) should never be less alone than when alone. Then it is that (if it be not his own fault) he may enjoy the best of company.

Next to the regulation of the appetites and passions, the most important branch of self-government is the command of our thoughts: which without a strict guard will be as apt to ramble, as the other to rebel. The great difficulty will be to keep them fixed and steadily employed upon your subject. To this end let the mind be calm and dispassionate—View your theme in every light—collect your best thoughts upon it—Clothe those thoughts in words, and consider how Mr. Addison, Mr. Melmoth, or any other writer you admire,

mire would express the same—Guard against a vagrancy or dissipation of your thoughts—recall them when they are rambling; and observe by what connexion of ideas or images they are enticed away from their work, and refix them more diligently—If you have a pen and ink at hand, set down your best sentiments on paper—If your subject be of a religious nature, it may not be amiss to recollect some proper text of scripture, as a standard to which you may recall your vagrant forces.

Let the matter of your meditations, be something seasonable, important or entertaining. Consult the temper your mind is in, or ought to be in at that time; and let your subject be suitable to it.

Take care that nothing vain, or vicious steal into your mind when alone. Hereby you make yourself a very bad companion to yourself; and become your own tempter.

If the place or occasion will admit it, think *vivâ voce*, or utter your thoughts aloud.

In your evening meditations, go over in your mind, the best things you have read.

read or heard that day, and recollect them the next morning (c).

The great advantage of being alone is, that you may chuse your company; either your books, your friend, your God, or yourself. There is another will be ready to intrude, if not resolutely repelled. By the turn of your thoughts you may detect his entrance, and by what passage he stole in. You may know him by his cloven foot. And you have the best precept, exemplified by the best precedent, how to eject him (d).

If books be your subject, or what you lately read and laid up in your memory; your mental employment will be recollection and judgment. Recollection, to recall to your mind the good things you have read; and judgment, to range them under their proper class: And to consider upon what occasion, or in what company it may be proper or useful to produce them.

If you chuse a friend for the companion of your solitude; let it not be merely for

(c) Id quoque perutile fuerit, ante somnum notare quæcunque luce èa perfecta sunt. Ringel. de Rat. Stud. p. 110.

(d) See *James* iv. 7. compared with *Matt.* iv. 10.

for your own pleasure. But consider in what manner you may improve or entertain him. Or what it is you would learn from him; and in what manner you may best behave towards him, the next time you come into his company.

When you desire to have the great GOD for the object of your contemplation, (as you should always do in your religious retirements) your mind can't be too serious, composed and free. Now it is that the thoughts will be most apt to revolt and ramble: and the utmost efforts must be used to guard and guide them. Two things in this case you should never forget.

1. Earnestly implore his help, that you may think not only steadily, but worthily of him.
2. Consider him as present with you; and as witness to all the employment of your mind.

Lastly. If you are your own companion, and *self-meditation* be your business, you have a large field before you (e). But one thing be sure not to neglect, viz.

(e) See *Self-Knowledge*, part iii. chap. 1.

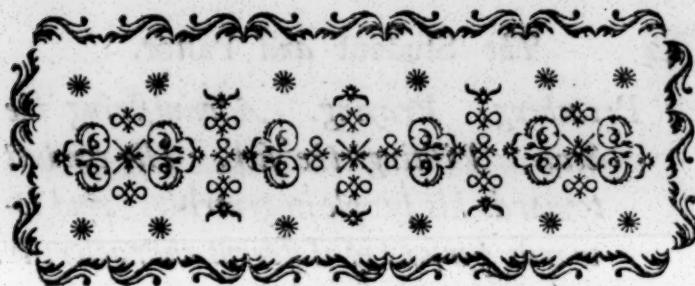
viz. Sharply and impartially to reprove yourself, in case of any observable failure; and resolve to amend your conduct in that particular, especially when the same circumstances recur.

The End of Part I.



THE





THE  
PASTOR.

---

PART II.

THE business of a Pastor is to do all he can to promote the eternal interest of the souls of men. And to keep his eye continually on this, the great object of the sacred office, will be a good direction to him in the prosecution of it.

He is now to improve, regulate, digest and apply that stock of knowledge he has taken so much pains to acquire: And examine what part of it will be most helpful to him in his great design.

The duties of the Pastor's office may be comprised under the six following general heads.

*Preaching,*

*Preaching. Praying. Administering the Seals. Visiting the sick. His conduct towards his people in general. And towards persons of different characters in particular.*

1. Preaching. This may be divided into two parts;

*Preparation. And elocution.*

1. Preparation. Which consists of composition, and the duties immediately previous to preaching.





## C H A P. I.

### *Of composing of sermons.*

‘ **B**ESIDES all the usual academical preparations, the study of languages, sciences, divinity, &c. there is a particular art of preaching to which if ministers did more seriously apply themselves, it would extremely facilitate that service, and make it more easy to themselves, and more profitable to their hearers (a).’ For acquiring which art the rules laid down in this and the three following chapters may be helpful to those who are entering upon the sacred employment.

1. The first thing to be considered, is the choice of the subject. Here you must consult your own genius, taste and abilities: And choose those subjects which have most impressed your own mind; for on those you are most likely to succeed, and

(a) Wilkin’s *Ecclesiastes*, p. 1.

and to produce the most mature and useful sentiments.—Consult also the temper, taste and capacities of your audience. For the more suitable your subject, stile and sentiments are to them, the more likely you will be, both to please, and improve them. And therefore a minister should never fix, nor chuse to preach, amongst a people, whose opinions are widely different from his own. ‘ Let the most useful and pertinent subjects, be your most frequent choice. Those are the most useful, which are the most edifying: And those most pertinent, that are most fitted to the capacities, and necessities of the auditory. To both which you ought to have a special regard (b).’—If you are at a loss for a text, consult the contents of the feveral volumes of sermons, you have by you. That a man may form himself to preaching he ought to take some of the best models, and try what he can do on a text handled by them without reading them; and then compare his with theirs. This will more sensibly and without putting him to

(b) Barecroft’s *Ars Concionandi*, p. 92.

to the blush, model him to imitate, or (if he can) to excel the best authors (c).—Whatever particular text strikes your mind with more than common force, in the course of your reading or meditating the scriptures, pen it down with some useful strictures that may occur to you, for the foundation of a future work. By this means, you will have a good supply of suitable texts at hand—A sermon should be made for a text, and not a text found out for a sermon. For, to give our discourses weight, it should appear that we are led to them by our text. Such sermons will probably have much more effect than a general discourse to which a text seems only to be added as a decent introduction, but to which no regard is had in the progress of it (d).—Affect not an obscure, difficult or barren text, to shew your ingenuity in throwing light upon it, or set others a wondering what you can make of it. Discourses from such texts

(c) Burnet's Past. Care, p. 226, 227.

(d) Id. p. 285.

texts must be either unprofitable or unnatural (e).

2. Having chosen your subject; your next care is, to be furnished with a store of useful and pertinent thoughts upon it. Having fixed your spot on which to build, you are now to prepare materials. To this purpose, carefully peruse your text, both in the original and different translations. Attend to its connexions and reference; and observe what is the principal subject it points to. Collect from your concordance, or common-place book to the bible, or from Mr. Clark's *Annotations*, or from Wilson's *Christian Dictionary*, and others, all its parallel places; or the several scriptures that have a reference to it. Pen them down on loose paper, to be properly interwoven into the discourse under any particular head or branch of it— Consult other authors on the same subject. Use their thoughts, but not their words, unless you quote them expressly; which

(e) *Id. et Ibid.* Many will remember the text that remember nothing else; therefore such a choice should be made as may at least put a weighty and speaking sentence of the scriptures upon the memories of the people. *Id. p. 217.*

which should never be done, unless your author be a writer of eminence, and of good repute with your audience. And let it be a sentiment so weighty, and well expressed, as deserves to be remembered by them ; and then they will remember it the sooner as coming from him, than from yourself.

3. Having thus provided materials ; form your plan. Let your method, as well as your subject, flow from your text. Let the division be easy and natural, and such as the audience would expect. ‘ Let it arise from the subject itself ; and give a light and just order to the several parts. Such a division, as may easily be remembered ; and at the same time help to connect and retain the whole. In fine, a division that shews at once the extent of the subject, and of all it’s parts (f).’—Avoid a tedious multiplication of particulars under every general head of your discourse. Let your particular heads be not only few, but distinct ; and affect not to conceal the number and order of them, if they be distinct and natural,

(f) Cambray’s Dialogues on Eloquence, p. 9.

tural, as some modern preachers do. 'Tis a false delicacy to aim at reducing a sermon to the form of a polite harangue. The other method of expressing the number of the heads in their proper order, is not only more pleasing to the common sort of hearers, but a help to their understanding and memory; which a preacher should by all means carefully regard (g).

' It will be proper, to draw your method  
' or plan, on a loose piece of paper laid  
' before you, with the several particulars  
' under their respective general heads;  
' and whatever place of scripture, or in-  
' ferences, &c. you meet with in reading  
' or meditating, pertinent to any particu-  
' lar point you shall speak to, you may  
' then place them under that particular:  
' For all things may not come to your  
' mind at once, and a thought is so  
' quickly gone (let your memory be al-  
' most ever so tenacious and retentive)  
' that

(g) 'Tis but a bad rule in Alsted (at least for vul-  
gar auditories) when he advises to conceal and alter  
the method for variety's sake. *Cryptis dispositionis tol-  
lit fastidium auditoris.* This may be true of itch-  
ing curious hearers, but not of such as regard their  
own profit and edification. Wilk. Eccles. p. 5.

‘ that you will hardly retain it, unless it be in this manner committed to paper. And whatever place of scripture you make use of, which you do not well understand, consult the ablest commentators on that passage for the meaning of it; that you may not apply it to a wrong sense (h).’

4. Having thus provided materials, and formed your plan, begin the superstructure. Which will now be raised and adorned with great ease, and be continually improving upon your hands. For no man can talk well on a subject, of which he is not entirely master (i).

‘ In the beginning you must endeavour to gain the favour of the audience, by a modest introduction, a respectful address, and the genuine marks of candour and probity (k).’ Let your exordium

## D

## dium

(h) Barecroft’s *Ars Conc.* p. 111, 112.

(i) Etenim ex rerum cognitione efflorescat & redundet oportet oratio: Quæ nisi subest res ab oratore percepta & cognita, inanem quandam habet elocutionem, & ferè puerilem. Cicero *de Orat.* 1. 1. §. 6.

(k) Cambray’s *Dialogues on Eloquence*, p. 117. —Sed hæc adjuvant in oratore, lenitas vocis, vultus, pudoris significatio, verborum comitas. Cicero *de Orat.* 1. 2. §. 43.

dium be short, modest, grave and striking; either by proposing your method, and entering upon your subject directly: Or by a few important general observations, which are connected with, or naturally lead to it: Or by some short unexpected remark on the words of the text.

In your enlargement on particulars, if you find your thoughts don't run freely on any point, do not urge them too much; this will tire and jade the faculties too soon. But pursue your plan: Better thoughts may occur afterwards, which you may occasionally insert.

Let your best sentiments stand in the beginning or end of a paragraph, and the rest in the middle, which will pass very well in good company. And let every head conclude with some striking sentence, or pertinent scripture.

As every compleat sermon resembles a little book, the method of composing the former, may be the same with what *Rinkelbergius* tells us he used in composing the latter.

‘ My first care (says he) is to form in my mind, a perfect plan of the work before me. Then in a large tablet, or

‘ a

‘ a sheet of paper, I set down the titles  
‘ of the chapters, or the several heads I  
‘ am to discourse on. Then I look over  
‘ them to see if they have their proper  
‘ place, connexion and coherence: And  
‘ alter them as I see occasion. Then  
‘ whilst my mind is still warm with the  
‘ subject, I take a brief sketch of what is  
‘ proper to be said under each head,  
‘ which I write down on a loose piece of  
‘ paper; these I afterwards transfer into  
‘ my plan, and in a fair hand transcribe  
‘ under their proper heads. By this  
‘ means, I have the whole subject and  
‘ method of the work under my eye at  
‘ once. Then I every day transcribe a  
‘ chapter for the press, and add, or ex-  
‘ punge, as I go along, according as the  
‘ matter requires. After this, when I see  
‘ nothing deficient, or redundant in the  
‘ subject, I apply myself to revise the  
‘ language (l).’

D 2

Let

(l) Ringel. de Ratione Stud. p. 88, 92. Vid. Ars  
Concio. p. 92.

Let your application be close, fervent and animated (*m*). To which end, get your own heart warmed and penetrated with your subject. For however drowsy, or inattentive your hearers may be in the beginning, or middle of a discourse, they should be always awakened, and warmed at the close. ' 'Tis oftentimes proper at the end of a discourse, to make a short recapitulation, wherein the orator ought to exert all his force and skill, in giving the audience, a full, clear, concise view of the chief topicks he has enlarged upon (*n*). And let the last sentence of the sermon, be either your text, or some pertinent scripture, or some weighty thought well expressed and worth remembering.

5. Having thus raised your superstructure on the plan propos'd, you must put the finishing hand to the work, by decently

(*m*) Il ne suffit pas de savoir d'où il faut tirer les usages ; il est nécessaire de connoître le but qu'on doit se proposer dans une application. Or ce but, c'est d'émouvoir, de toucher ses auditeurs, de leur inspirer les sentimens de piété, d'amour de Dieu, de charité, &c. Ost. de l'exercice, p 126.

(*n*) Cambray's Dialogues, p. 118.

cently adorning it: Which is the business of a revisal, wherein you are to re-examine the method, matter and style.

i. The method. Here perhaps you may see some small alterations necessary; e. g. this head may come in more naturally before that; such a sentiment will shine to more advantage at the conclusion of a paragraph; and this particular head is not sufficiently distinct from that, and therefore both had better be wrought into one.

2. With regard to the matter. Such a sentiment is expressed before, therefore strike it out here; too much is said upon this part of the subject, too little upon that; add here, retrench there; if any new thought, or pertinent scripture occur to your mind, search out the proper place where to dispose of it.

3. With regard to your style. This thought is obscurely expressed, explain it; this sentence is equivocal, be more determinate; this is too long, shorten it; here is a jingle, correct it; this disposition of the words is harsh and hard to be pro-

nounced, alter it; this expression is too mean and vulgar, substitute a better (o).

I shall conclude this chapter with the following general rules relating to the style of the pulpit.

1. Let it be plain, proper and perspicuous; and then the shorter it is, the better. A concise, full and nervous style is always most striking, therefore most pleasing. To obscure and weaken the sense by a studied ornament or flow of words, is wrong oratory, and nauseous to every one of true taste.

' The words in a sermon must be simple and in common use, not favouring of the schools, or above the understanding of the people. All long periods, such as carry two or three different thoughts in them must be avoided; for few hearers can follow or apprehend these. Niceties of style are lost before a common audience (p).'

2. Let

(o) *Equidem in libris excudendis, cum speciosum aliquem vocum contextum, aut verba duo, ornata invenio, lætitia exulto majore, quam si aureum reperirem. Ringel. de Rat. Stud. p. 111, 112.*

(p) Burnet's Past. Care, p. 223.

2. Let your numbers be full and flowing. And carefully avoid all harshness and dissonance in the choice and disposition of your words: This is a part of rhetoric, which though carefully cultivated by the antients, is too much neglected by the moderns (q). ‘ In reading over a discourse to ourselves, we must observe what words sound harsh, and agree ill together; for there is a musick in speaking, as well as in singing, which a man though not otherwise critical in sounds, will soon discover (r).’

3. Observe a medium between a too short and too prolix a style. The sententious style is apt to be defective. A prolix one (if the members of a long sentence be not judiciously disposed, and fraught with a weight of sentiment) te-

D 4 dious

(q) See treatise on Prosaic numbers—Numeros equidem vitam vocaverim orationis; quod haud obscurè apparebit, si sententiam numerosam solveris, iisdem servatis & transpositis verbis. Quippe quæ ante efficax erat, ea soluta ridicula videbitur; quamobrem in omni opere, prima curarum esse debet, ut res five membra cohereant; proxima, ut verba, seu modulatio numerorum. Ringel. de Rat. Stud. p. 92, 93.

(r) Burnet’s Past. Care, p. 236.

dious and disagreeable; and a low creeping style is as unbecoming the dignity of the pulpit, as a high and turgid one. There is a decency to be observed in our language, as well as our dress (s): With regard to both a prudent man will consider, not only what is decent in itself, but what is most so at certain times (t).

4. An illustration of your subject by sensible images, and apt similes, will always be agreeable.

Lastly.

(s) Expression is the dress of thought, and still  
 Appears more decent, as more suitable.  
 A low conceit in pompous words express'd,  
 Is like a clown in royal purple dress'd;  
 For different stiles with different subjects sort,  
 As several garbs, with country, town and court.  
 Some by old words to fame have made pretence,  
 Antient in phrase, mere moderns in their sense;  
 Such labour'd nothings in so strange a style,  
 Amaze th' unlearned, make the learned smile.

Pope's *Essay on Criticism.*

(t) *Omnique in re, posse quod deceat facere, artis & naturae est; scire quid quandoque deceat, prudenter.* Cic. *de Orat.* l. 3. §. 55.

Lastly. Let the conclusion of your periods be harmonious, and your concluding thoughts the most memorable (u).

See more on this subject, Part II. C. 4.

(u) *Elocutio partibus quatuor consummatur. Primum enim si res tractetur magnifica, caveo ne particula usquam jaceat humi, infra dignitatem orationis—tum etiam video ne verbum idem, aut syllaba, si fieri possit, bis ponatur—ad haec do operam, ut numerorum gratia, sive concentus cohæreat, aut per omnes periodi partes, aut saltē in fine—Postrema cura est, ne multi fint fines sententiarum, qui pedes easdem habeant.* Ringel. de Rat. Stud. p. 90, 91.



## C H A P. II.

*General rules relating to Preaching.*

1. **I**T were adviseable for young preachers to pen down every sentence of their sermons in short-hand; and trust nothing to their memories, 'till they are masters of a free, fluent, and proper style; and have acquired a good command of their spirits, a free utterance, and a maturity of sentiments. Then they may venture to leave something to the memory, by writing half sentences, 'till by degrees they are able to trust to it a good part of the enlargement under every head. This will be no great burden, provided they take care to be thoroughly masters of their notes, before they go up into the pulpit; and will be a great help to a free, decent and natural elocution.

I would not advise any young minister, though ever so happy in a strength of memory, entirely to lay aside his notes; it can answer no valuable end, and the inconveniencies

veniences of it are these;—the thoughts may possibly wander; in that case you are bewildered without a guide: This reflection will create a confusion and perplexity in the mind, which the hearers will observe with pain; and you will scarce ever be able to recover the right tract in that hurry of spirits without many a trip and much trouble: This will throw a tremor, at least a diffidence on the mind, which will make it difficult to resume your wonted courage. Besides, when so much attention is bestowed on the memory, you will be apt to pay too little to the judgment and affections. You will not have leisure to observe how much your own heart is affected, or how you may best affect that of your hearers; who are never more pleased, than when they see their preacher composed, free and deeply impressed with his own subject; and never more disgusted, than when they observe him confused, bewildered, or unattentive to what he himself delivers. Besides, the inaccuracy of diction, the inelegance, poverty and lowness of expression, which is commonly observed in extemporaneous discourses, will not fail to offend every hearer of good taste.

2. Go to the bottom of your subject : And think of every thing that ought to be said upon it : And consider what points, or parts of it, your hearers would be glad to have cleared up, or most enlarged upon. To skim off only the surface, is to put off your audience with froth, The weightiest sentiments often lie at bottom ; be at the pains then of diving deep to bring them up from thence. On the other hand,

3. Take care you do not torture your subject, by aiming to exhaust it. Don't endeavour to say every thing that can be said, but every thing that ought to be said upon it. A preacher's excellence is seen, not so much in saying a great deal upon a text, as saying the best things in the best manner (x).

4. Don't

(x) Nolim te facere, quod pravâ quadam ambitione, vulgus professorum hodiè facit, ut omni loco coneris omnia dicere, sed ea duntaxat, quæ explicando præsenti loco sint idonea ; nisi siquando, delectandi causâ, digrediendum videbitur. Erasm. de Rat. Studii, p. 186.

Un prédicateur judicieux fait parler, & se taire, il fait dire ce qu'il faut, & s'arrêter où il faut. Oïter. de l'exercice du Min. p. 142.

4. Don't croud your thoughts too thick. This will but fatigue and perplex the minds of your hearers, who should always have time to follow you. If you pour water too fast into the funnel, it will run over.

5. Protract not your discourse to an undue length. The best sentiments will not be attended to, whilst your hearers are impatiently waiting and wishing for the conclusion. It were better to offend by the other extreme, provided your matter be solid, well disposed and well digested. Better leave your audience longing than loathing. Abstinence is less hurtful than repletion. I think Mr. *Luther* says in his table-talk, that one necessary qualification of a preacher, is to know when to leave off.

6. In practical preaching (which should be your ordinary strain) remember that you preach to Christians; and let your chief motives to practice be drawn from Christian principles. It is verily a fault in too many of the publick teachers of our times, that their sermons are moral harangues generally; and *Tully's Offices*; and *Seneca's Epistles* serve them instead.

‘stead of the *Bible*: They are furnished with nothing but mortal precepts, as if they were preaching at *Old Rome* or *Athens*, and their auditors were all infidels (y).

7. Be sure to consult the capacity and understanding of your hearers. Remember you are not declaiming in the academies, but preaching to an illiterate congregation: Take care then that you be not too learned, or too logical; that you do not shoot over the heads of your hearers (as they call it) either in your doctrine or language. Condescend to their capacities; and let it be your ambition and care whilst you are treating of the highest subjects, to be comprehended by the lowest understanding: Wherein archbishop *Tillotson*, archbishop *Sharp*, and Dr. *Sherlock* will be your best patterns.—Tis not easy to be conceived how much ignorance of divine things there is in the minds of the greatest part of those you preach to.

It was the observation of a late celebrated divine in the church of Rome, (y) That there are always three quarters of an or-

(y) *Edward's Preacher*, vol. I. p. 73.

'dinary congregation, who do not know  
' those first principles of religion, in  
' which the preacher supposes every one  
' to be fully instructed (2).'  
It is to be hoped that matters are somewhat mended  
in our Protestant assemblies; but still  
there is reason to fear, that they who com-  
pose the major part in our places of wor-  
ship, are deplorably defective in their know-  
ledge of the true doctrines of christianity.  
And as the subject should not be too deep  
for their conceptions, so neither should  
the style be too high for their compre-  
hension; and therefore all scholastic terms,  
systematical phrases and metaphysical de-  
finitions should be for ever banished from  
the pulpit.

8. Affect not to shew your parts, by  
entering upon nice and curious disquisi-  
tions, or by a strong portrait of general  
characters. This is shooting beside the  
mark, or at least will but very seldom  
reach it. The chief end it will produce  
(and which you will be thought to aim at)  
is your own applause, and not your peo-  
ple's profit. ' Too close a thread of  
reason,

(2) Cambray.

‘ reason, too great an abstraction of  
 ‘ thought, too sublime and too metaphy-  
 ‘ sical a strain, are suitable to very few  
 ‘ audiences, if to any at all (a). ‘ I  
 ‘ love a serious preacher, who speaks for  
 ‘ my sake, and not for his own, who seeks  
 ‘ my salvation, and not his own vain-  
 ‘ glory. He best deserves to be heard,  
 ‘ who uses speech only to clothe his  
 ‘ thoughts, and his thoughts only to  
 ‘ promote truth and virtue. Nothing is  
 ‘ more despicable than a professed de-  
 ‘ claimer, who retails his discourses as a  
 ‘ quack does his medicines (b).’

9. Endeavour to affect your own mind  
 with what you deliver; and then you will  
 not fail to affect the minds of your hear-  
 ers.

(a) Burnet's *Pastoral Care*, p. 219.—'Tis here  
 that our preachers are most defective. Most of their  
 fine sermons contain only philosophical reasonings;  
 sometimes they preposterously quote scripture only  
 for the sake of decency and ornament. Their ser-  
 mons are trains of fine reasoning about religion, but  
 they are not religion itself. We apply ourselves too  
 much to the drawing of moral characters, and in-  
 veighing against the general disorders of mankind;  
 but we don't sufficiently explain the precepts and  
 principles of the gospel. Cambray's *Dialogues*,  
 p. 160, 161.

(b) Cambray's letter to the French academy, p. 230.

ers (c). There must be a life and power in your delivery, to keep up the attention and fix the affection of them that hear you; ' for artificial eloquence, without a flame within, is like artificial poetry; all its productions are forced and unnatural, and in a great measure ridiculous (d).' ' Tis said of *John Baptist* that he was a burning and shining light, *ardere prius est, lucere posterius; ardor mentis, est lux doctrinæ.* ' Tis a hard matter to affect others with what we are not first affected ourselves (e).'

10. When you are called to touch upon controversy (which you should avoid as much as possible in the pulpit) be candid, clear, short and convictive. Be sure that your arguments be solid, close and strong; and your answers at least as clear as the objections: For if these be plain and those perplexed, you will but confirm the error

you

(c) *Summa, quantum ego quidem sentio, circa mendos affectus, in hoc posita est, ut moveamur ipsis.*  
Quintilian, l. 6. c. 2.

(d) Burnet's Pastoral Care, p. 223.

(e) Bishop Wilkin's Ecclesiastes, p. 252.

you mean to confute (f). Avoid all needless censures, especially of persons by name. When a censorious spirit is kindled by the preacher, nothing will sooner be catched by the hearers; and that unhallowed flame will quickly be propagated far and wide.—Dark debates in divinity are like rocks not only steep and craggy, but barren and fruitless, and not worth the pains of climbing to the top; and what influence they have on the spirits of men, is commonly a bad one. 'Tis scarce to be imagined what harm these theological subtleties do us. As spirits extracted from bodies, are always hot, heady and inflammatory: So divine truths subtilized and too much sublimated, heat, intoxicate and discompose the minds of men, fire their tempers, and kindle very hurtful and unruly passions, to the disturbance of their own peace and that of others.

11. Let your great aim in every sermon be to please God and profit your people, to do them good rather than gain their applause. Don't covet a reputation for

(f) See Wilkin's Eccles. p. 26.

for eloquence; it will turn you off from higher views. Besides, an excessive desire of popularity and fame will subject you to many secret vexations: As well may you expect the sea to be undisturbed, as the mind of an ambitious man to be long free from disquietude (g).

*Lastly.* Endeavour to get the great principles of Christianity wrought into your own heart; and let them shine in your temper and conversation. ‘ Ministers have one great advantage beyond all the rest of the world in this respect, that whereas the particular callings of other men prove to them great distractions, and lay many temptations in their way to divert them from minding their high and holy calling of being christians, it is quite otherwise with the clergy; the more they follow their proper callings, they do the more certainly advance their general one; the better priests they are, they become also the better christians. Every part of their calling, when well performed

(g) *αλλ' εργαζομενος της λογιας, ως αν αρεσει τω θεω; ει μεν επαινειτω και παρα των ανθρωπων, μη διακριειτω τα εγχομια, μη παρηχουτω δε αυτα των ακροατων, μη διπτειτω, μηδε αλγειτω.* Chrysost. de Sacer. l. 5.

‘ performed, raises good thoughts, and  
 ‘ brings good ideas into their minds, and  
 ‘ tends both to increase their knowledge  
 ‘ and quicken their sense of divine mat-  
 ‘ ters (h).’—*Cicero, Quintilian and Horace*,  
 all made virtue a necessary qualification  
 in a complete orator (i). I am sure it is  
 so in a christian preacher. It is required  
 of a presbyter that he be *blameless*. *Tit.*  
*i. 6. (k)*. When a preacher has the great  
 doctrines which he teaches in-wrought in-  
 to his temper, and he feels the influence  
 of them on his own spirit, he will reap  
 from thence these three great advantages  
 in his publick ministrations: He will  
 then

(b) *Burnet’s Pastoral Care*, chap. 8.

(i) *Quæ (sc. eloquentia) quò major est, probitatem  
 jungenda, summâque prudentiâ; quarum virtutum  
 expertibus si dicendi copiam tradiderimus, non eos  
 quidèm oratores efficerimus, sed furentibus quædam  
 arma dederimus.*

*Cicero de Oratore, I. 3. §. 14.*

Sit ergo nobis orator, quem instituimus, is qui à  
*M. Cicerone* finitur. *Vir bonus dicendi peritus—*  
*ideòque non dicendi modò eximiam in eo facultatem*,  
*sed omnes animi virtutes exigimus.* *Quintilian*,  
*Lib. xii. c. 1.*

*Scribendi rectè sapere est et principium et fons.*

*Hor. de. Art. Poet.*

(k) *In Sacerdote etiam aliis licita prohibentur.*

*Vide Hieronym. in loco.*

then speak from his own experience. He will with great confidence and assurance direct and counsel others. And will more readily gain belief to what he says (l).—Without this experimental sense of religion in the heart, and a steady practice of it in the life, all the learning in the world will not make a person, either a wise man, a good christiaa, or a faithful minister (m). And to induce him to a wise circumspection in his conduct, he should often consider the influence his own example will have upon his people, for whom he must live, as well as for himself; and who will think themselves very justifiable if they indulge to no other liberties than such as they see their minister take himself (n).

Before

(l) Edward's preacher, vol. 1. p. 321.

(m) *Aliud enim est scire, aliud sapere. Sapiens est, qui didicit non omnia, sed ea quae ad veram felicitatem pertinent; et iis quae didicit afficitur, ac transfiguratus est.*

Erasm. Ecclesiastes, p. 21.

(n) *ιηφαλιον ειγαι δει τον ιερεα, και διορατικον, και μυρις σαντα οθεν κεκτηθαι της οφθαλμος, ως εκ εαυτω μονου, αλλα και πληθει ζωγρα τοσυτω.*

A bishop had need be sober and vigilant, and have all his eyes about him, who lives not only for himself, but for so great a multitude of people.

Chrysostom de Sacer. l. 3. c. 12.

Before I close this chapter, let me add one thing more, viz. That a minister, both with regard to his conduct and preaching, should take care not too be too much affected with common fame. Though he is not to be absolutely indifferent to the applause and censures of others, yet he should arm himself against the bad influence of both. He must expect to pass through good report and evil report: And both are apt to make hurtful impressions on weak, unstable minds—As to evil report, *af Stoic* will tell you, that, in confidence of your innocence, you ought absolutely to despise both it and its author.

I think *Chrysostom's* advice is more suited to the character of a christian minister. ‘ As for groundless and unreasonable accusations, says he, (for such a christian bishop must expect to meet with) it is not right either excessively to fear them, or absolutely despise them. He should rather endeavour to stifle them, though they be ever so false, and the author of them ever so despicable; for both a good and bad report is greatly increased by passing through the hands of the multitude, who are not accustomed

‘ ed

‘ ed to examine, but to blab out every  
‘ thing they hear whether true or false.  
‘ Therefore we are not to despise them, but  
‘ to nip those evil surmises in the bud,  
‘ speak friendly to those who raise them;  
‘ be their characters ever so bad, and omit  
‘ nothing that may remove their wrong  
‘ impressions of us. And if after all they  
‘ persist to defame us, we may then de-  
‘ spise them (o).’

(o) Chrysostom de Sacerdot. L. v. c. 4.





## C H A P. III.

*Of the duties immediately previous to the work of the pulpit.*

**T**O prepare you for this service, the following directions may be useful.

1. Before you enter on the public worship of God in his house, be sure to apply yourself to the throne of grace, for a divine blessing on your labours. It was a usual saying of Mr. *Luther*, *Bené orasse, est bené studuisse* (p). And, in these your previous devotions, see that your heart be very sincere and fervent. You must pray for yourself, and pray for your people.

(1.) You must pray for yourself—that God would help you to bring your own Spirit

(p) *Sub horum concionis ecclesiastes det se profundæ deprecationi, et ab eo postulet sapientiam, linguam, et orationis eventum, qui linguas infantium facit disertas. Incredibile dictu quantum lucis, quantum vigoris, quantum roboris & alacritatis hinc accedat ecclesiastæ.* Eras. Eccles. p. 485.

Spirit into a frame suitable to the work you are about to undertake—that the word you deliver may affect your own heart, or that you may first feel the holy flame you would communicate to others—that a *door of utterance* may be opened to you, and that you may speak as becomes *the oracles of God*—that he would direct you to speak to the consciences and particular cases of your hearers, or that what you deliver, may be a word in season (q)—and that he would especially assist you in prayer, and give you *the spirit of grace and supplication*.

(2.) You are to pray for your people—that their attentions may be engaged both to the evidence and importance of the things they are to hear—that God would open their hearts to give them a fair and candid reception, and that no bad prejudice may prevent the good effect of the word—that the grace of God may co-operate with his appointed means, to set home divine truths with power on their consciences—that they may be able to

E retain

(q) *Ad docendum divina nemo idoneus est, nisi doctus divinitus.* Id. p. 110.

retain the *good seed* that is sown---that it may bring forth it's proper fruit in their future lives---and finally, that their prayers for you, and behaviour towards you, may strengthen your hands, and make you more serviceable to their souls.

2. Let your mind and countenance be very composed and serious, and your gesture grave and decent. To this end, endeavour to bring your spirit into a religious and devout frame, before you come into the house of God. Attend to the real importance of the work you are called to, both when you are the mouth of God to the people, and when you are the mouth of the people to God. Avoid those objects, and avert those thoughts, which tend to discompose your mind, or indispose it for the sacred service you are going to engage in. Clear your heart of all vain and worldly cares, and especially of all vexatious and disturbing thoughts, before you enter on the publick service of God. Endeavour to attain a spiritual, holy and heavenly frame of mind by previous prayer, reading, and devout meditation. It will render your sacred work both more agreeable and easy to yourself, and more beneficial.

cial to your hearers, if you endeavour to carry into the house of God that serious temper of mind which you desire they should carry out of it.

3. Before you enter on your work, take time to premeditate and recollect some of the most weighty, pertinent and important sentiments and expressions you may have occasion for either in prayer or preaching. This will be especially necessary, if you give any thing in charge to the memory; that you may not be at a loss for those sentiments when they are to be produced in their proper place. The mind should be well seasoned with the discourse before it be delivered. 'Tis not enough to be master of your notes, but you must enter into the spirit of your subject. Call in every thing that is proper to improve it, and to raise and animate your mind in the contemplation of it.

4. Affect your mind with the consideration of the solemnity and importance of the busines you are going about; and how much may depend on a faithful execution of it. Few men had ever more natural courage than Mr. *Luther*, and yet he was often heard to say, that even to the

latest part of his life, he never could conquer his fear when he mounted the pulpit (r). And St. Chrysostom used to say, that that scripture, *They watch for your souls, as those that must give an account.* Heb. xiii. 17. struck his mind with constant awe (s).

*Lastly.* Keep up a self-command, and a becoming presence of mind; and get above a low servile fear of men. If you are master of your subject, and come well furnished with suitable materials for their religious improvement, and produce plain scripture and reason for what you advance, you have no cause to fear either the critic or the censor; but may with modesty conclude, that you are at least as good a judge of the subject you have taken so much pains to understand and digest, as they are, who perhaps never gave it so precise or extensive a consideration.

(r) *Etsi jam senex, et in concionando exercitus sum, tamen timeo quoties suggestum consendo.*

Wilkin's Eccles. p. 254.

(s) ο γαρ φοβος ταυτης της απειλης συνεχως καταστει με την ψυχην. Chrysostom de Sacerdotio. 1. 6.

C H A P. IV.

*Of pulpit-eloquence.*

UNDER this phrase, I comprise the *language*, *pronunciation*, and *action* that are most becoming the pulpit.

i. The language. This must be plain, proper, pure, concise and nervous.

(1.) Let your language be plain or perspicuous (t.) 'Tis a nauseous affectation to be fond of hard words, or to introduce terms of art and learning into a discourse addressed to a mix'd assembly of plain, illiterate christians. The ridicule of it will appear, by supposing you were to talk to them in that manner in common conversation. They who don't understand you, will dislike you; and they who do, will see the affectation, and despise you.

E 3

(2.) Let

(t) *Prima est eloquentiae virtus, perspicuitas; et quisque ingenio minus valet, hoc se magis attollere et dilatare conatur: ut staturā breves in digitos eriguntur, et plura infirmi minantur.* Quintilian, L. ii. c. 3.

(2.) Let your words be well-chosen, proper and expressive; such as your hearers not only understand, but such as are most fit to convey the sentiments you mean.

(3.) Aim at a purity of language. To this end, diversify your style, as far as it is consistent with perspicuity and propriety — And avoid the frequent and near repetition of the same word, unless it be very emphatical, and the re-iteration rhetorical — Shun all harsh and jingling sounds — Have an eye to an easy cadence at the close of your periods, and conclude as often as you can, with an emphatical word — Avoid dubious and equivocal expressions, or such as leave the sense indeterminate — and all low, vulgar and barbarous words — Let your phrase be like your dress, decent, unaffected, and free from gaudy and studied ornaments — And, in fine, let all your art be to imitate nature.

(4.) A concise style very well becomes the pulpit: Because long periods convey not the sense either with so much ease, or force, especially to uncultivated minds. But affect not to speak in Proverbs. A short sententious style, if it be expressive, full and

and clear, will be always strong and universally agreeable.

(5.) Aim at a striking, nervous style, rather than a diffusive, flowing one: And let the most emphatical words convey the sublimest thoughts; and if there be a glow in the sentiment, it will seldom fail to shine in the expression (u). See ch. i. ad finem.

## 2. The pronunciation.

(1.) Let this be quite free, natural and easy. ' The whole art of good oratory consists in observing what nature does, when unconstrained. You should address yourself to an audience, in such a modest, respectful, and engaging manner, that each of them should think you are speaking to him in particular (x).' Every sort of affected tone is to be carefully avoided. Suppose your whole auditory to be but one person, and that you were speaking to him in your own parlour. And let the nature of your subject direct

E 4 the

(u) *Verbaque provisam rem nosa invita sequentur.*  
Hör. de Art. Poet.

(x) *Cambray's Dialogues*, p. 98.

the modulation of your voice: Be cool in the rational, easy in the familiar, earnest in the persuasive, and warm in the pathetic part of your discourse. Every passion requires a pronunciation proper to itself (y).

(2.) Let the voice be always distinct and deliberate; and give every word its full sound. Attend to your own voice: If it be not strong, full and clear to yourself, you may be sure 'tis not so to many of the audience. And to help your voice, address yourself chiefly to the remotest part of the assembly, and then they who are nearer will hear plainly enough--Let your pronunciation be very deliberate. You will be in little danger of speaking too slow, provided your voice and action and the weight of the sentiment keep up your hearers' attention.

(3.) Affect not to move the passions by a loud, clamorous voice. This is not *powerful* preaching; and argues no excellence in the preacher, but the strength of his lungs. 'Tis unseemly in a Christian minister to imitate the priests of *Delphos*,

(y) See *Treatise on Elocution*, p. 29.

phos, who delivered their oracles with rage and foaming. This noisy, blustering manner shocks a delicate hearer, and degrades the dignity of the pulpit. To be a *Boanerges*, 'tis not necessary to become a *Stentor* (z). However,

(4.) Let your voice be always lively and awaking; though at sometimes it should be more animated than at others.

(5.) Now and then a sudden change from a higher to a lower key (when something remarkable occurs) will wonderfully catch the attention. This is what *Quintilian* calls *Ars variandi*, which, when well timed, is not only graceful in itself, but pleasing to the ear, and gives no small relief to the preacher (a).

(6.) Repeat sometimes the most remarkable sentences with a free, decent, easy manner.

(7.) Make a pause after some important thought. These pauses (especially near the close of a discourse) will have a

E 5 very

(z) Edward's preacher, vol. i. p. 198.

(a) *Ars porro variandi, cum gratiam præbet, ac renovat aures, tum dicentem ipsa laboris mutatione reficit.*

very good effect; not only as they render the service more solemn, but give both yourself and your hearers time to compose and recollect; and mightily awaken their attention to what follows; which should therefore be always something worthy of it. ‘There are some occasions, ‘where an orator might best express his ‘thoughts by silence: For if being full ‘of some great sentiment, he continue ‘immoveable for a moment, this surprising pause will keep the minds of the ‘audience in suspense, and express an ‘emotion too big for words to utter (b).’ —In a word, (as *Quintilian* observes) the great art of elocution, is no more than a proper and natural modulation and variation of the voice, according to the nature of the subject (c).

3. The action. This must always be adapted to the pronunciation, as that to the passions. Here two extremes are to be avoided, viz. too much, and too little action.

(1.) Let not your action be too much. ‘We have some at home that outdo the ‘French,

(b) *Cambray's Dialogues on Eloquence*, p. 89.

(c) *Secundum rationem rerum, de quibus dicimus, conformanda vox est. L. xi. c. 3. Quintil.*

‘ French, and invent new ways of an apish and uncouth deportment. One is ready every moment to throw himself out of the pulpit, and the people that sit below him are in continual fear that he will be in good earnest. Another reckons up all the heads and particulars on the tips of his fingers, which he exposes to the gazing people. Others by odd and fantastic gestures of the like nature delight to give the auditors diversion, and make good the primitive use of the word *pulpit*, which was the higher part of the stage where the players and comedians acted. But our serious preacher abhors all of this kind, and never affects to be theatrical (d).’—

To be more particular—Your action should not be perpetual. The body or any part of it must not be in constant motion. As the preacher should not be, like the trunk of a tree, always immovable; so neither, like the boughs of it, in continual agitation.—Nor must the motion of the body be uniform and unvaried. A steady

(d) Edward’s Preacher, Vol. I. p. 200.

steady vibrative swing of the body from the right to the left, like the pendulum of a clock, is very unnatural and faulty. ‘ As there is a monotony in the voice; so there is a uniformity in the gesture, that is no less nauseous and unnatural, and equally contrary to the good effect that one might expect from decent action (e).’—Again, your action should not be mimical. The hands should seldom stir, unless when some passion is to be expressed, or some weighty sentiment pointed out.—Nor too violent. As when it exceeds the force of the expression, and the dignity of the sentiment: A fault we often see in company among persons of a warm, impetuous temper.—Nor theatrical, pompous and affected. This becomes neither the dignity of the pulpit, nor the solemnity of the work. The chief action should be (1.) in the eyes: which should be commanding, quick and piercing; not confined to your notes, but gently turning to every part of your audience, with a modest, graceful respect. (2.) The head: Which should always regularly

(e) *Cambray's Dialogues*, p. 91.

gularly turn with the eyes. (3.) The hands. The right-hand should have almost all the action; at least the left-hand is never to be moved alone. (4.) The upper part of the body: Which should always correspond with the motion of the eyes, head and hands, and should be for the most part erect. Avoid a lazy lolling on the cushion; on which your elbows should rarely rest, and when they do (e. g. when you make a considerable pause) let it be with an easy, graceful attitude.—In a word, let all your pulpit-actions, be natural, free, decent and easy: Which, by frequent practice and a careful observation of these rules, will be soon attained (f).

(2.) The other extreme to be avoided is, too little action. To stand like a statue, stiff and motionless, when you are speaking to your people of the most momentous and affecting things, is as unnatural and as disagreeable as a set, uniform tone in pronunciation; and looks as if you were not in earnest yourself, and cared not whether your people were so: How singular would this appear if you were talking to

(f) See Treatise on Elocution, p. 39, and seq.

to a friend in private, upon any particular affair that very much concerned him, and to which you desire to excite his most earnest attention. How will your hearers be able to keep from sleeping, if they see you are scarce awake yourself.—Into this extreme the *English* preachers are most apt to fall, as the *French* into the former. But after all let it be remembered, that the end of a decent, just and lively pronunciation and action, is only to excite and fix the attention of your hearers. Let your chief care be still directed to the propriety and importance of your sentiment, and the dignity of your subject: For it will never fail to disgust your hearers, if you rouze their attention by a solemnity of voice and action, and then put them off with something low, trite or unaffected.

CHAP. V.

. Of Prayer.

2. **T**HE next most considerable part of the pastoral office is *prayer*; which is commonly divided into the *Grace* and *Gift* of prayer.

1. The grace, or the spirit of prayer. This signifies either (1.) Praying with the heart and spirit, with the intent engagement of all the mental powers, understanding, will, and affections. Or (2.) with the exercise of those christian graces which are proper to enkindle a devout fervour of mind in that part of worship; such as humility, self-abasement, faith, love, delight, desire, trust in God, hope and heavenly-mindedness. Or (3.) under the particular aid and influence of the Holy Spirit who helps our infirmities, and teaches us to pray: So says the apostle, *We know not what to pray for as we ought, but the spirit helpeth our infirmities*, Rom. viii. 26. by composing our spirits, giving

giving us a greater abstraction from the world, and a greater elevation of heart, and calling into lively exercise the graces before-mentioned.—And this spiritual prayer may be entirely mental, without the use of words; and 'tis this spirituality which gives to our prayers all their effect and power; and without it no prayer, though ever so properly composed or decently delivered, will be acceptable to God, or available to ourselves: which therefore we should frequently and earnestly ask at the throne of divine grace.—But 'tis the other kind of prayer, which I am at present more particularly to consider, *viz.*

2. The gift of prayer; or an ability to perform this duty extempore, in a decent and devout manner, publickly. And to this purpose three things are required. (1.) An enlargement of mind. (2.) A regulation or arrangement of our thoughts. (3.) A freedom of expression, or ready utterance. These will take in the matter, method, and manner of prayer.

(1.) An enlargement of mind; which takes in the matter of prayer. Whatever

ever we want, or desire, or know we ought to desire, should be the subject-matter of our prayers. In order to an enlargement of mind in prayer, and a suitable supply of matter,

We must (1.) be well acquainted with the state of our souls ; and attend to our spiritual wants and weaknesses. The christian's own heart is his best prayer-book. The more we converse with that, the better shall we converse with God.— It may not be amiss to commit to writing those defects and blemishes, we chiefly observe in our characters, the mercies we have received (especially any particular mercies we have received by prayer) either deliverance from evil, direction in difficulties, or the accomplishment of a desired end : each of which will be a proper subject either of petition, confession or thanksgiving.—(2.) When you address yourself to the sacred work, see that the mind be free, composed and serious. Its conceptions and apprehensions will then be more ready, and proper thoughts will more freely occur.—(3.) Possess your mind with an awful reverence of the Divine Majesty, whom you address as the heart-search-

searching God.—(4.) Let your expression be very deliberate and solemn, that the mind may have time not only to conceive, but to regulate and contemplate it's conceptions.—(5.) Daily study the word of God, with this view in particular, that you may be the better supplied with materials for devotion.—(6.) Endeavour after a comprehensive view of things. Let the mind take a wide scope; and let it freely run on those subjects that most affect it.—(7.) Let practical divinity, and a right disposition of heart towards God, be your principal care and study.—(8.) Take some time to premeditate and recollect the chief topicks of prayer, and commit some few well-chosen expressions and sentences to memory.—(Lastly.) Let the subject you have preached upon, (and especially those you have found your mind most warmly affected with, and some of the most striking sentiments and expressions in them,) be wrought into the composition of your future prayers, ranged under their proper heads. This in time will greatly enrich your magazine of materials for prayer; and lead you to proper thoughts

thoughts and words on the most important occasions.

(2.) We should not only aim at a comprehension, but observe a method in prayer: The usual method is (1.) Invocation. Wherein we are to make a solemn mention of some of the divine attributes. Nor should this be always confined to the beginning of prayer. It may very properly be repeated by way of preface to some of the principal petitions we put up to God; which when pronounced with seriousness and reverence will have a good effect to awaken the devotion of the heart. But always remember to invoke the All-mighty under those attributes and perfections which are most suitable to the blessings you ask of him: e. g. When we pray for an accession of divine knowledge and wisdom, the address may be in this form. "O thou father and fountain of light, in whom there is no darkness at all, who givest to man the wisdom he asketh of thee, we beseech thee to disperse the darkness of our minds, shine into our hearts, and liberally bestow upon us that wisdom which thou knowest we want." — (2.) Confession

cession of sin. The transition to this part of prayer will be natural and easy, by taking particular notice of those moral perfections of the divine nature, in which we ourselves are most defective: e. g. The righteousness and holiness of God, as thus.

“ O holy, holy, holy, Lord God Al-  
“ mighty! who art of purer eyes than to  
“ behold iniquity, wherewith shall we  
“ thine unholy creatures presume to ap-  
“ pear before thee, or lift up our eyes or  
“ thoughts to heaven, which our iniqui-  
“ ties have reached before them! — In  
public prayer, let these confessions be ge-  
neral. In private, particular, as your  
own consciousness of guilt may suggest.

—(3.) Petition. The connexion here  
may be properly made by the mention of  
the divine mercies, or the remembrance of  
Christ's mediatorship, and the promise of  
grace and pardon to penitent sinners:  
And most properly begins with petition  
for pardon; then, for a more perfect re-  
novation; after which proceed to beg  
for other spiritual blessings; as more light  
and knowledge, more love to God, more  
faith and hope, more strength against  
temptation and sin, more purity and hea-  
venly-

venly-mindedness, more indifference to the world, &c. Then proceed to temporal blessings.—(4.) Particular intercessions. These it will be best to pre-compose; and commit to memory the expressions and phrases that are most proper to be used on particular occasions. But let the phrase and subject be often varied, that it may not appear to be a form. And in all our prayers, upon any particular or special occasions, there's great need of much pre-meditation.—(Lastly.) Thanksgiving. The subjects of these are either general or particular; and as various as our mercies.

This part of prayer may perhaps come in more properly after *invocation*; and the transition from thence to *confession*, may be made by the mention of our unworthiness of the divine blessings.

Besides this general method, it would be proper to preserve in your mind a particular method of the several blessings you are to pray for, the sins you confess, and the mercies you commemorate. Let these be laid up in the mind, in order to be produced in their proper places.—But do not tie yourself down to the invariable use of any method, whether general or particular;

cular; for a too close application of the mind to the method or expression of prayer, is apt to obstruct the devout employment of the heart. Besides, this will make the prayer appear too formal, artificial and studied, and bring a drowsiness upon the minds of those whose devotion you are called to excite and lead; who are never more pleased and edified in this part of worship, than when they observe us to be affected with our own prayers. A heart inspired with warm devotion will not be confined to exact method. And a lively start of thought, and a strong, surprizing sentiment, uttered out of its due place, will strike the minds of our fellow-worshippers so strongly, that they will not attend to the want of method, or if they do, will readily excuse it.—Enlarge mostly on that part of prayer with which you find your own mind most affected; and let not any occasional deviations from your purposed method interrupt the fervent workings of your spirit.—'Tis good however to be master of a regular system of materials, and of pertinent expressions under each head, which may serve instead of a form (but still to be uttered in the most solemn and

and reverend manner) when the powers of the mind happen to be heavy and unactive, or oppressed by the presence of others at a time we are called to the performance of this duty.

(3.) Next to the matter and method, we should have a regard to the manner of prayer. This respects (1.) the gesture of the body; which should be always decent, grave and humble, and expressive of the reverence of the heart: As folding the hands, or putting the open palms together, sometimes erect, sometimes declining with the body; sometimes lifted up with the eyes, according as the pious or humble motions of the heart direct. Let the eyes be mostly closed, or if open, steadily fixed: for nothing is more indecent than for the eyes to wander in the performance of this duty.—(2.) The pronunciation. Let this be slow, solemn, grave, distinct and serious.—Let not your words flow faster than your thoughts; that the latter may have time to be maturely conceived and well expressed; by which means, one thought will more naturally rise out of another, and be in readiness to be produced whilst the other is uttering. And when

the

the conceptions are thus before-hand with the expressions, the mind will be free, composed and serious; and have time to feel the weight of it's own thoughts; which will be a great help to the true spirit of prayer. ' Due and proper pauses and stops will give the hearer time to conceive and reflect on what you speak, and more heartily to join with you; as well as give you leave to breathe, and make the work more easy and pleasant to yourself. Besides, when persons run on heedless with an incessant flow of words, being carried as it were in a violent stream, without rests or pauses, they are in danger of uttering things rashly before God; giving no time at all to their own meditation; but indulging their tongue to run sometimes too fast for their own thoughts, as well as for the affections of such as are present with them. All this arises from the hurry of the tongue into the middle of a sentence, before the mind has conceived the full and compleat sense of of it (g).—

Avoid

Avoid the extremes of a too low and muttering voice, which some use, and a clamorous, strong, noisy tone, which others affect; as if they expected to be heard for their loud speaking; or as if the devotion of the heart consisted in a strength of lungs. This is improperly called *powerful* praying, and will be very disgusting to many.—(3.) The expression. Here let the following rules be observed.

(1.) Let your language be plain, but proper. Avoid all low, vulgar and obsolete phrases, but affect not an elegant or rhetorical style; much less an obscure and mystical one; for how can the mind feel the weight of that sentiment it does not understand (h)?

(2.) Scriptural expressions, if happily chosen, are very ornamental in prayer.—  
' It would be of excellent use to improve  
' us in the gift of prayer, if in our daily  
' reading of the word of God, we did ob-  
' serve what expressions were suited to the  
' several parts of this duty; adoration,  
' confession, petition, or thanksgiving;  
' and let them be wrought into our ad-  
' dresses to God that day (i).—And to

F be

(h) See Wilkins on Prayer, p. 48.

(i) Watts's Guide to Prayer, p. 75.

be furnished with a *Copia* of scriptural expressions to be used in prayer, read *Henry's Method of Prayer*, *bishop Wilkin's discourse on the Gift of Prayer*; or *Closey devotions*.

But here let the two following cautions be observed.

1. Let not your prayer be all in scripture-words. Some conceive a prayer of nothing but texts of scripture tacked together; which prevents the mind from taking a proper scope, and leaves no room for the invention, or the utterance of pious thoughts.

2. Avoid the dark, mystical expressions of scripture; which you have reason to believe the greatest part of your hearers do not comprehend the sense of.—‘ If we indulge the use of such dark sentences in our speaking to God, we might as well pray in an unknown tongue, which was so much disapproved of by the apostle, 1 Cor. xiv. 9. Let not the pomp and sound of any hard Hebrew names, or obscure phrase in scripture, allure us to be fond of them in social prayer, even though we ourselves should know the meaning of them, lest we ‘ found

‘ found the thoughts of our fellow-wor-  
shippers (k).’

(3.) If you have not the faculty of cloathing your own ideas in proper and pertinent words, borrow the phrases and expressions of others upon the same subject. Make a collection of them from the best authors, but remember to pick out those which come nearest to your own phraseology, or such as you best approve, and would wish to have in readiness when you are speaking on that particular subject. And when you are furnished with a store of such well-chosen expressions, turn them into the form of a prayer, and commit them to memory; which expedient will not only facilitate your expression, but give room for farther invention.

— ‘ ’Tis usual for young students to be  
‘ very careful in gathering common-place  
‘ books: It would be a much greater ad-  
‘ vantage, if they were as diligent to col-  
‘ lect, under proper references, any such  
‘ particular matter, or expressions in  
‘ prayer, wherewith at any time they find

(k) Watts’s Guide to prayer, p. 76.

themselves to be more especially affected.  
(1).

(4.) 'Tis very proper and requisite that your prayer, after sermon, be formed on the subject you have been treating of; wherein you may go over all the heads of your discourse, and touch upon the most important sentiments, and repeat the most striking expressions in it. But as the mind will be then sometimes fatigued, and the powers exhausted and unfit to be put on the new labour of invention, it may not be amiss to pen down the short concluding prayer *verbatim*, to be repeated *memoriter*; but without confining yourself either to the precise expressions, or method you had before conceived, if the mind be able or disposed to enlarge.

(5.) Avoid those phrases and modes of expression which you know to be disagreeable or disgusting to your hearers; and prefer those that will give the least offence to any party or denomination of Christians.

6. Throw your prayer out of a form as much as you can, by varying both method

(1) *Wilkinson Prayer*, p. 39.

thod and phrase, and by a fresh supply of sentiments and expressions; which will be a great help both to your own devotion, and theirs who join with you in this part of worship.

(7.) Let your prayers, as well as your sermons, be rather too short than too long.

(8.) Avoid preaching prayers. ‘ Some persons, who affect long prayers, are greatly faulty in this respect; they are speaking to the people and teaching them the doctrines of religion, and the mind and will of God, rather than speaking to God the desires of their own mind. They wander away from God to speak to men. But this is quite contrary to the nature of prayer (*m*).’

(Lastly) Be not too fond of a nice uniformity of words, nor of perpetual diversity of expression in prayer. ‘ We should seek indeed to be furnished with a rich variety of holy language, that our prayers may always have something new and something entertaining in them; and not tie ourselves to express one thing

F 3. ‘ always

(m) Watts’s Guide to prayer, p. 86.

‘ always in one set of words, lest this  
 ‘ make us grow formal and dull, and in-  
 ‘ different in those petitions. But on the  
 ‘ other hand, if we are guilty of a perpe-  
 ‘ tual affectation of new words, which we  
 ‘ never before used, we shall sometimes  
 ‘ miss our own best and most spiritual  
 ‘ meaning, and many times be driven to  
 ‘ great impropriety of speech ; and at best,  
 ‘ our prayers by this means will look like  
 ‘ the fruit of our fancy, and invention,  
 ‘ and the labour of the head, more than  
 ‘ the breathings of the heart (n).’

I shall conclude this chapter with a few  
 general directions how to attain and im-  
 prove this useful gift.

(1.) Accustom yourself to a serious, de-  
 vot and decent discharge of this duty  
 every day in private ; whereby a readi-  
 ness of conception and expression will be  
 sooner acquired.

(2.) Spare no pains to gain so excellent  
 a talent ; for ‘tis not to be had (especially  
 by some) without much application ; but  
 ‘tis worth it all : And there are few things  
 on which the labour of one who is a stu-  
 dent

(n) *Idem.* p. 89.

dent for the sacred ministry can be more usefully employed.

(3.) Often pray for this gift of prayer.

(4.) Endeavour to get your spirit deeply impressed with the great things of religion: and let those sentiments which most affected you in your most serious frames, be wrought into your prayers.

(5.) Maintain a manly presence of mind, and use all proper means to conquer that bashfulness and timidity of spirit which young persons are subject to, and is a great hindrance to a decent discharge of this duty (o).

(6.) Take every opportunity you can to hear others pray; and imitate them in every thing you observe to be decent, graceful and excellent.

(Lastly.) Vary your concluding doxologies. And that you may herein give no offence to any, it may be proper to confine yourself to those of scripture, which are very various, and such as follow.

Heb. xiii. 21.—*Through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

F 4

Rom.

(o) See Dr. Watts's *Guide to Prayer*, p. 110—112.

**Rom. xvi. 25, 27.**—Now to him that is of power to establish you according to the gospel of Jesus Christ. To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

**Rom. ix. 5.**—Through Jesus Christ, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

**Gal. i. 4, 5.**—Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

**Ephes. iii. 20, 21.**—Now unto him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

**1 Tim. i. 17.**—Now unto the king eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

**1 Pet. iv. 11.**—Through Jesus Christ to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

**2 Pet. iii. 18.**—Through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

**Jude ver. 24, 25.**—Now unto him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless

*faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.*

*Rev. i. 5, 6.—Unto him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests to God even his Father: To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

*Rev. v. 13.—Blessing and honour, and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*





## C H A P. VI.

*Concerning the administration of the sacraments.*

I. **O**F Baptism.

‘A minister ought to instruct his people frequently in the nature of baptism, that they may not go about it merely as a ceremony, as it is too visible the greater part do, but that they may consider it as the dedicating their children to God, the offering them to Christ, and the holding them thereafter as his ; directing their chief care about them to the breeding them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (p).’—In the administration of this ordinance ’tis best to keep to the original institution as your rule and guide.—The most natural method to be used in the celebration of it, seems to be this :

(1.) Recite

(p) Burnet’s Pastoral Care, p. 185.

(1.) Recite the express words of the institution. Matt. xxviii. 28. Then,

(2.) It would not be amiss to say something in vindication of those two positive institutions of christianity, *Baptism* and *the Lord's Supper*; and to shew the excellency of the christian dispensation from its simplicity, and that it is not encumbered with those numerous external ceremonies, which the Jewish dispensation was.

(3.) Make a short discourse on the ordinance as a sacrament of the christian church; wherein you may offer some useful remarks on the practice of infant-baptism; then add some proper observations relating to the mode and manner in which the ordinance is to be celebrated; laying this down as an undisputed principle, that in the manner of performing divine worship 'tis always best and safest to keep close to the divine rule; so as neither to go beyond, nor fall short of it: for in the former case, we know not whether human and arbitrary additions will be approved of God; but this we are sure of, he will never condemn us for not doing what he never commanded; and therefore the sign of the cross

by

cross may be safely omitted, as no where enjoined by God himself: and as to the latter case, (i. e. neglecting any part of our rule, or those instructions he hath given us for the directory of our worship) this must certainly be criminal, and derogatory to the honour of the divine institutor. But where the circumstance or mode of any religious action is left undetermined in the form and words of the institution, that which is most decent and convenient is to be preferred. Hence sprinkling or washing the face of the baptized person gently with the hand, is to be preferred to plunging the body all over in water; because the former is more safe and decent, and the latter no where commanded as the standing universal mode of baptizing.

(4.) Be more particular in explaining the nature, end, and design of this ordinance, and in opening the typical part of it. Here you may bring in the doctrine of sanctification, and the purifying influences of the holy Spirit figured by the water in baptism, and the relation this christian institution has to the baptizing of proselytes, and to the Jewish ordinance of circumcision.

(5.) You

(5.) You may then briefly open the nature of the present duty of the parents; in giving up their child to God, and what is implied therein, viz. their desire that it should be received into the church of Christ, and brought up in the Christian faith. And be very particular in your address to the parents of the infant which is to be baptized; pressing upon them the importance of their charge, and the care they are to take in the education of their child; especially in reference to its spiritual and eternal concerns. But this may be either before, or after the ceremonial part of the ordinance is performed.

(6.) Proceed then to ask a blessing upon the ordinance; and pray for the infant in particular.

(7.) Then take the infant, and washing it gently with water, baptize it in *the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

Then, lastly, (if the exhortation to the parents do not come in here, but was addressed to them before) conclude with the thanksgiving prayer and the benediction.

## II. Of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

1. Of the method of performing it.
2. Of taking in communicants.

1. Of the method of performing it. The most regular method seems to be this.—(1.) Make a short preparatory discourse, tending to open the nature and design of this sacrament, and the necessity and importance of its intention ; or to excite some devout affections in the minds of the communicants, especially relating to the love of Christ, the design of his death and sufferings, and the necessity of a frequent commemoration thereof in this sacred institution. But let the address be very serious, and very solemn.—Then (2.) read distinctly the words of the institution.—Then (3.) solemnly pray for the divine blessing and presence ; give thanks to God for the institution of the visible symbols to affect your mind, and assist your faith ; and earnestly pray that the great end of this sacred solemnity may be visibly answered in every one of the communicants, and be manifested in their growing

ing love to the Redeemer, and more steady attachment to his gospel, as their only rule of faith and life—Then (4.) break the sacramental bread, and distribute it either personally, or by the hands of the deacons.—To assist the devotion of the communicants, 'tis the custom of some ministers to pronounce now and then some serious and weighty sentences relative to the love and sufferings of Christ, or the benefits of his death. But this is disused by others under an apprehension that instead of quickening the devotion of our fellow-worshippers, it may interrupt it, by diverting the course of their own meditations—(5.) After the distribution of the bread, make a short prayer to beg the continuance of the divine presence and blessing, and that God would graciously forgive the infirmities of our worship; and give thanks for the element you are about to partake of, and pray that it may answer the design intended by it; which is all that protestants mean by the consecration of the elements.—But 'tis the custom with some to pray for a blessing on both the elements, in one single prayer.—(6.) Then follows the distribution

of

of the cup in the manner before-mentioned.—In some churches 'tis the custom for the minister to partake of the elements last: And in others first; pronouncing with an audible voice these, or some such words, ‘In obedience to Christ’s command, and in remembrance of him, I take and eat this bread, as the memorial of his body which was broken for sin.’ And so in partaking of the cup, ‘I take and drink this cup, &c.’—After the distribution of the elements, the minister sometimes makes a short exhortation to the people, relating to the nature of their sacramental obligations, and exhorting them to be faithful thereunto.—After which a collection is made for the poor by the deacon from pew to pew, or at the door when the congregation breaks up.—(7.) Then follows a suitable hymn or psalm.—(Lastly.) Conclude with a short thanksgiving prayer.—In order to furnish your mind with suitable matter for your sacramental exhortations and prayers, it is requisite to read some proper devotional treatise on this ordinance, before you enter on the celebration of it.

2. The method of admitting communicants to the Lord's table.—This is different in different churches. For direction in this affair these general rules may be of service.

(1.) As every particular church is a select religious society, every member of it has a right to be satisfied of the character and qualification of every new member that is admitted into it. This is plain from the very nature and design of such a society, and necessary to preserve the purity and discipline of the church.

(2.) That the qualifications required in the candidates, should be no other than what we have plain warrant from scripture to demand, and such as are necessary to preserve purity and discipline: For herein (as well as in other parts of Christian discipline and church-government) we are strictly to adhere to scripture as our rule, so far as it affords us any direction in this matter. And therefore to require that the spiritual experiences of the candidate be publickly declared by himself, or read by another, in the presence of the church, before he is suffered to communicate with them,

them, (which is the practice in some protestant-dissenting congregations) is not only unnecessary, but unwarrantable, and often attended with very bad effects; 'tis unnecessary, because 'tis found not to answer the end principally designed, the greater purity of the church; 'tis unwarrantable, because we have no shadow of a precept or precedent for it in scripture, or primitive antiquity; and the bad consequences of it, are (1.) It bars the way to this ordinance, discourages meek, humble and modest persons from proposing themselves to the communion, whilst it is easily accessible to men of bold, forward and confident tempers. (2.) 'Tis a temptation to the candidates to declare more than they have really experienced, lest the church should reject them; or to describe the animal passions as divine influences, and the workings of the imagination as the operations of the Spirit, which young and unexperienced christians are too apt to do. (3.) It supposes and countenances some very mistaken principles, viz. that none have a right to this ordinance but those whose hearts are really converted; nor even they, 'till they are sensible of this, and are able

to

to make others sensible of it, by describing the time, means, manner and effects of that conversion. (4.) It attributes a power to the church which they have no right to, viz. of judging the hearts of others; and that by a very precarious rule, viz. from what they say of themselves. For if they judge by the general character, life and conversation of the candidate (which is a much better rule) there is no necessity for a publick declaration of his experience. It likewise implies a power in the church of excluding from this ordinance all that cannot produce such evidence of their real conversion as will satisfy every member of the church. Upon what foundation so extraordinary a claim is built 'tis hard to say. (Lastly.) This practice tends to make the members thus admitted, too careless and confident after their admission; for when they have the testimony of the whole church concurring with their own strong imagination that they are true converted christians, and look upon the sins they commit after this only as the weaknesses of God's children, they are in great danger of being betrayed into a false and fatal peace. Therefore.

(3.) A

(3.) A creditable profession, and unblemished character and conversation may be deemed as a necessary and sufficient qualification for the holy communion. This is necessary, in order to keep up the discipline, and preserve the purity of the church; and it is sufficient, because we do not find that our sacred rule requires any thing farther. And

(4.) As soon as the members of the church are satisfied of this general qualification of the candidate, they have no right to refuse their assent to his admission.

(5.) Provided they have this satisfaction, 'tis not material by what means they receive it. Sometimes the elders of the church are deputed to confer privately with the candidate, and enquire into his knowledge of the design and nature of this ordinance; and whether his views and ends in desiring to join in it be sincere and right. — Sometimes this is left entirely to the minister, whose business it more properly is; who, if he be satisfied in those points, acquaints the church of it at the next ensuing sacrament: and thereupon declares, that if any of the members present

sent do not signify to him (before the next sacrament) any objections against the candidate's admission, he will then (by their consent) be admitted to the ordinance, as a member of that church.—In other churches, members are admitted by the minister only, without any notice given to the church 'till the very time of their admission; nor even then are they apprized of it any other way, than by a few petitions in the minister's prayer particularly, in behalf of the new-admitted member.

(Lastly.) The church has an undoubted right to expel irregular and unworthy members: This is generally done at first by suspension; when the minister intimates his desire, and that of the church, to the delinquent member, that he would refrain from coming to the sacrament till he hears farther from him; which is generally sufficient, without the solemnity of a formal and publick expulsion.

## C H A P. VII.

*Of visiting the sick.*

**T**HIS is a very arduous and delicate office, and especially in some circumstances; and a different method of address and conduct is requisite according to the different characters of the persons you visit.

It will therefore be proper,

I. To lay down some general rules to be observed, in order to a right execution of this part of your duty.

II. To specify some particular cases.

I. To lay down some general rules to be observed, in order to a right execution of this part of your duty.

(1.) A previous preparation for it is very proper; by considering what kind of address will be most necessary and suitable to the person you visit. 'Tis something strange (as a late judicious divine well observes) that ministers who take so much pains to prepare for the work of the pulpit, should generally take so little, to prepare

pare for this, which is one of the most difficult, and most important offices in the ministry (q.)

(2.) It would be adviseable to have in readiness a good store of scripture-expressions, adapted to the support and comfort of the afflicted; which may be easily collected from the common-place-book to the bible; and, out of these, chuse such as are most applicable to the case of your friend.

(3.) Adapt yourself to his taste and understanding, as well as to the circumstances of his case; by making such observations, and using such expressions as you know are most familiar and agreeable to him: But take care to explain the phrases you make use of, if you have reason to think he does not understand them.

(4.) Let your deportment and address be very free, friendly, close, tender and compassionate.

#### 5. Place

(q) *Cette fonction est aussi une de celles, dont on s'aquite le plus mal. La pluspart des ministres n'y aportent aucune préparation. Cependant, elle n'est pas moins difficile qu'importante. On se prépare pour les sermons, mais non pas pour voir les malades.*

5. Place yourself in the condition of the person before you; and consider in what manner you would wish a minister or friend to behave to you in those circumstances.

6. Whilst you are tender, be sure to be faithful; and have respect to the approbation of your conscience afterwards. Remember that you are a minister of the gospel, and must not sacrifice the cause of truth and godliness to a false shame or tenderness.

Lastly. Let your prayer for the sick person be short, but very serious and solemn, and adapted as much as may be to the state of his soul, and the danger of his disease. In all which offices there is great need of much piety, fidelity and wisdom (r).

II. Let us now consider how a minister ought to behave in his visitation of the sick, under some particular circumstances. And

(1.) If

(r) Pour montrer que la piete est necessaire, vous n'avez que remarquer, qu'on fait trois fonctions au pres de malades. Il faut sonder la conscience, leur donner les conseils, qui sont necessaires, et prier pour eux. *Idem*, p. 290.

1. If you have reason to believe that the afflicted person you visit is a real good Christian, your work will not be very difficult; it may be pleasant and useful; and you may possibly receive more advantage from him, than he does from you. For a Christian's graces are at such a time commonly most lively, and the tongue very faithful to the sentiments of the heart; so that you will presently see what it is that lies most upon his mind. And as your present business will be to administer *consolation* and solve his *doubts*,

Your topicks of *consolation* may be taken (1.) From his past experience. Direct him to look back to the goodness of God to him, and the sensible experience he has had of the divine love and presence. Bid him think of what God has done for his soul, and thence draw *David's* conclusion, 'Because the Lord has 'been my help, &c.'—(2.) Refer his thoughts to the paternal character. And bid him think of the compassions of a Father to a weak and helpless child.—(3.) Open the inexhaustible stores of the divine mercy in the gospel.—(4.) Insist on the mighty efficacy of the Redeemer's

er's blood.—(5.) The genuine marks of a true faith and sincere repentance.—

(Lastly.) Endeavour to affect his mind with a lively apprehension of the heavenly glory, to which he will very shortly be received.

And as to his *doubts*, tell him, (1.) That he is not a proper judge in his own case, under the present weakness of his powers; that the lowness of his animal spirits causes him to look too much upon the dark side, and to see every thing through a wrong medium; that he has no reason to suspect his case to be worse now than it was when he had better hopes concerning it.—(2.) That the best of men have had their doubts; that if it be the sign of a weak faith, 'tis however the sign of some true faith.—(3.) That 'tis much safer to be doubtful than over-confident.—

(4.) That however variable be our frame, God's regards for his own children are unchangeable.—(5.) Bid him examine his doubts to the bottom, and trace them up to the true source; and perhaps they may appear to arise from the agency of Satan, who delights to disturb the tranquility of those he cannot destroy.—(6.) Ask him,

if

if he has any hopes? and whether he would part with the little hope he has, for the greatest treasures on earth? Bid him examine the foundation of those hopes, as well as that of his fears; for he can never judge aright 'till he look on both sides: And oftentimes a christian's weak hope has a better foundation than his strongest fears. But,

2. Is the character of the sick person you visit doubtful? your busines is more difficult, and your address must be more cautious.

If there be no apparent danger of death, (1.) Endeavour to give him just notions of a particular providence; that though men do not so often attend to it as they ought, yet most certain it is, both from scripture and reason, that whatever befalls every individual man on earth is under the immediate direction of providence: And as to this affliction in particular, perswade him to regard and consider it as the hand of God.—Then (2.) discourse on the wisdom and goodness of God in sending these occasional rebukes of his providence; which, whatever we think, are sent for the best ends. Afflictions are the phy-

G 2 sick

sick of the soul, designed to purify and purge it.—(3.) Under this view of things press upon him the exercise of patience, submission and a total resignation to the divine will; and direct him to look upon the present dispensation (though grievous) as sent in mercy to him, and as what may hereafter produce the most excellent effects.—(4.) Tell him, that in the best of men there are sins and follies sufficient to justify the severest dispensations of God's providence; that many good christians have suffered worse; and what reason he has to be thankful that his case is not more calamitous.—(5.) Remind him of the many mercies mixed with the present affliction.—(6.) If it should please God to restore him, exhort him faithfully to concur with the design of this visitation, by his constant endeavour to amend what his conscience now smites him for.

But if there be apparent symptoms of approaching death, exhort him (1.) seriously to review his past life, to call to mind the most remarkable transgressions of it, for which he should now greatly humble his soul before God, and sincerely renew his repentance.—And that his

repentance

repentance may be sincere and unfeigned, (2.) Endeavour to make him sensible of the evil and guilt of sin, from it's contrariety to the holy nature of God, and the inevitable ruin it exposes the soul unto.—

(3.) When he is thus humble and penitent, revive him with the consolations of the gospel; the amazing compassion and goodness of God to a world of sinners, in sending his Son to redeem them by his death; and the merits of the Redeemer's sufferings, whose blood cleanses from all sin.—Then (4.) Open to him in a plain and easy manner the gospel-method of salvation by Jesus Christ, and the only terms of pardon there proposed, *viz.* Repentance, faith, and a holy life: And tell him particularly, that saving faith in Christ does not consist in a confident persuasion that he died for him in particular, but in the lively exercise of love to him, a desire to serve and please him, and a humble dependance on his merits for justification and pardon.

—(5.) In a deep self-abhorrence for his sins, and in such a lively faith in Christ, advise him to call upon the Father of mercies for pardon through Jesus Christ his Son.—(6.) Remind him to settle his af-

fairs

fairs in this World, as well as he can; and then think—no more of it for ever—  
And (Lastly) Leave with him some suitable text of Scripture which you apprehend most applicable to the state of his soul. But,

3. If the sick man you visit has been notoriously wicked, and appears ignorant, insensible and hardened, your business then is the most difficult of all.

To make any right impression on such a one, you must (1.) Pray to God beforehand that you may be enabled to say something that is suitable to his case, which may be a means of awakening him to a proper sense of his danger—And then (2.) When you come into his room, appear deeply affected with his case. Let him see that you are more concerned for him, than he is for himself; that you are more sensible of his danger than he is of his own—Then (3.) In order to bring him to a proper sense of his state and danger, put some close questions to him relating to the holy and righteous nature of God; his infinite hatred of sin; the absolute impossibility of being happy hereafter but in his favour; the certainty of a future judgment, *when God will render*

render to every one according to his works; and the unspeakable importance of the soul's being safe for eternity.—Then (4.) Beg of him not to deceive himself with vain hopes; but be willing to see the truth of his case, as it is represented to him in the unnerring word of God, however dangerous or dreadful it may appear to him; for whilst he shuts his eyes against the danger, there's no possibility of escaping it (s.)

—(5.) If his distemper is like to be fatal, let him know it; and that all that can be done to escape everlasting misery, must immediately be done; that there is as yet some hope (though it be but small) that this possibly may be done; that on this moment depends his future condition for ever: And beg him not to lose this last and only cast he has for eternity.—

(6.) If his conscience by this means be awakened, and you observe some genuine relentings of heart, take that occasion to assist its workings, to enforce its reproofs and urge its convictions, 'till you see something like a true penitential remorse.—

Then (7.) Earnestly pray with him, and for

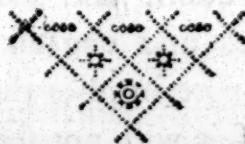
(s) See Burnet's *Pastoral Care*, p. 195.

for him; that God would continue to give him a just sense of his sin and danger, and that his grace and spirit may carry on those convictions 'till they issue in a real change of heart.—Then (8.) Take your leave of him in a tender and affectionate manner, not without giving him some hope that if the same sensible and penitent frame continue, there may be mercy in reserve for him: But beg of him whilst he has the use of his reason not to omit any opportunity of crying mightily to God for mercy through the merits of Jesus Christ his son.—(9.) In your next visit (which should be soon after this) if you find him penitent, exhort him to glorify God by making an ample confession of his sins in private, with all their hainous aggravations, and not to be afraid to see the worst of himself; and if he has in any matter injured or defrauded others, you must insist upon it, as a mark of true repentance, that he immediately make restitution or satisfaction, if it be in his power.—(Lastly.) If his penitential sorrow still continue, and you have reason to believe him sincere,  
you

you may begin to administer the consolations of the gospel, and address him as you have been directed in the case of the person before-mentioned under the like circumstances (t).

(t) See Spinks's *Sick-man visited.*

*Osterwald de la Visite des Malades.*





## CHAP. VIII.

### *Concerning the minister's conduct towards his people.*

HERE it will be proper, 1. to lay down some general rules to be observed at all times. And, 2. some particular rules applicable to extraordinary occasions.

1. To lay down some general rules to be observed at all times.

Previous to these I would desire you to observe these two things: (1.) Arm yourself with resolution, and prepare to meet with difficulties and contempt. The nature of your office implies the first, and all the dignity of it will not secure you from the last. But if you behave prudently and faithfully in it, you will meet with contempt from none but those who deserve it, and whose esteem would be no honour. (2.) Study the true nature of christian humility: And let your mind be cloathed with it as it's greatest ornament. But distinguish between that dastardly meanness and

and pusillanimity which makes you ashamed to look in the face, and speak in the presence of your superiors, (and may tempt you to an abject compliance with all their humours,) and that humility which arises from a reverence of God, a consciousness of your own defects, the difficulty of your work, and the knowledge of your character (u.) This will teach you to bear contempt with dignity, and applause with decency; the latter perhaps you will find not less difficult than the former. Let the knowledge of yourself be your guard against that vanity of mind which will be apt to steal into it when you hear the approbations or commendations of men. (x.)— Thus armed with resolution and humility, let your principal care be,

(1.) To

(u) *Laudata est in sacris literis humilitas, damnata superbia; sed est humilitatis genus, quo nihil est detestabilius; est et superbiae genus, quô nihil laudabilius.* Erasm. *Eccles.* p. 191.

(x) *Non solum adversus sinistra populi judicia, adversus malitiam etiam piè dicta calumniantium, adversus simulates illorum quibus ob vitam corruptam invisa est veritas, sed etiam adversus acclamations, & applausus hominum laudantium, debet habere solidum & immobilem spiritum.* Id. p. 20.

(1.) To be faithful to God and conscience ; and take care that nothing betray you into such a behaviour upon any occasion, for which your own mind will reproach you in secret. And a steady regard to this rule will lead you to decline the most usual and dangerous temptations.

(2.) Let your conduct to all be inoffensive, beneficent and obliging. Make it your practice, and it will be your pleasure, to do some kind office to every one to whom you have a power and opportunity of doing it with prudence. And let the Emperor *Titus*'s rule of conduct be yours, Not to let one day pass, if possible, without doing some good to one person or other.

(3.) Visit your people in a kind and friendly manner, as often as it suits with your convenience and theirs. This is the business of the afternoon : for the whole morning, and as much time as you can redeem at night, should be devoted to study. Where your visits are most pleasant and profitable, and most expected and desired, pay them most frequently. But where there is any prospect of doing good to any in your flock, there you should sometimes pay

pay your visits, tho' it be to the poorest persons, and especially when they are in trouble. And in all your visits take some opportunity of making moral remarks, or dropping some useful instructions, or leaving some good rule, or religious observation for their benefit. But this must be done not with a magisterial authority, or ministerial air, but with all the freedom and ease imaginable, *en-passant*, and when it rises naturally out of the subject of the conversation.

(4.) Throw off all affectation, parade, stiffness, morose conceit, reserve, and self-sufficiency. Let your ambition be to be distinguished by nothing but real goodness, wisdom and benevolence. And be courteous, free, condescending, affable, open, unreserved and friendly to all. But amidst all your freedoms, forget not the dignity and decorum of your character. (y)

(5.) Circumspectly avoid every thing that may give them unnecessary offence, whether

(y) Est autem non vulgaris prudentiae, sic esse mansuetum erga omnes, ut tamen officii autoritatatem tuearis; sic esse familiarem, modestum & comem erga subditos, ut familiaritas & lenitas non pariat contemptum. Erasm. Eccles. p. 166.

ther by word or conduct, tho' it be in matters of indifference. You may possibly in point of fidelity be obliged to give them offence in some important things; in all others therefore you should endeavour to conciliate their esteem and respect. It shews much weakness and little prudence and candour to be obstinate and tenacious of little things, whether modes, customs, or phrases which are offensive to others. 'Tis not walking charitably, nor following the things that make for peace; and is a violation of the apostle's rule of becoming all things to all men (z). But see that your charitable conformity do not transgress the laws of sincerity. \*

(6.) Above all, let your character be a fair copy of the virtues you preach; and let the documents of the pulpit be exemplified in the conduct of your life. A minister should abstain from the appearance of evil; not only from things criminal, but from those which may be interpreted to his dishonour, and reported to his disadvantage

(z) *Qui dum omnibus sese accommodat, tam varius est, ut interdum videatur sibi contrarius, cum sibi maximè constet undique.* Erasm. Eccles. p. 35.

vantage (a). Vide etiam supra, ch. 2. ad finem.

(Lastly.) Be much in prayer for wisdom, strength, prudence and capacity equal to your work and difficulties. This you will find as necessary as your most important studies. But take care that your private transactions with God, be very serious, solemn and sincere; and let your endeavours go along with your prayers. (b.)

2. To lay down some particular rules applicable upon extraordinary occasions; or proper to regulate your conduct towards persons of different characters.

(1) What

(a) Ecclesiastiae perpendendum est, quædam ejus esse generis, ut quanquam absint à crimine, tamen quoniam præ se ferunt malam speciem, non absint à criminis suspicione. Ab his quoque circumspectè cavendum est ecclesiastæ——quæ per se non crimina sunt, tamen maligno vulgo ad obtrectandum quam ad obtemperandum procliviori præbent male suscipiendi maleque loquendi materiam.

Id. p. 27.

(b) Ab eo petendum est qui solus largitur vera bona, petendum autem non oscitantè, sed assiduis simul & ardentibus precibus, nec modò votis postulandum est, ut detur, sed bonis etiam operibus ambiendum, ut quod datum est servetur, et indies augescat. Id. p. 22.

(1.) What is a right conduct towards those from whom you have received abuse, contempt, or just cause of offence ?

(1.) Your first care must be to guard your passions. Keep your temper, and banish all vindictive resentments. If possible, never think of it ; but be sure not to harbour the thoughts of it, which will but chaff and corrode the mind to no purpose. Be satisfied with a consciousness of your innocence, and consider the injurious person as an object of your pity rather than indignation. (2.) As you must endeavour to forget the offence ; you must not only cease to think, but forbear to talk of it, unless it be with an intimate friend to ask his advice. (3.) You may lawfully decline the company of the person who has thus injured you, and break off a familiar commerce with him, as you cannot look upon him as your friend. But take every opportunity of doing him good that lies in your power. (4.) Embrace the first opportunity and overture of re-establishing a good understanding and renewing your former amity. And (lastly) in all cases of this nature, let it be remembered that the misconduct of others towards you, will not justify your

yours towards them, that you are still under the same obligations to walk by the rules of that *wisdom which is from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, &c.*

(2.) What is a right conduct towards narrow, bigotted, censorious christians, who are fond of their orthodoxy, and zealously attached to party notions ?

(1.) These persons must by no means be disputed with or opposed, because whilst they have much more zeal than knowledge, they are very apt to be warm and angry at any argument that is levelled against their favourite sentiments; and much more if they cannot answer it. And whilst bigotry blinds their minds, they are not capable of seeing the force of an argument; much less of being convinced by it: they should therefore be treated like foward children, or persons in a passion——(2.) Take every opportunity of secretly undermining their false notions, (especially if they be dangerous) by hinting at their bad consequences; or by setting the opposite doctrine of truth in a strong light from Scripture. But dwell not long upon it, lest they apprehend themselves particularly aimed at, which they will not fail to

to resent—(3.) Treat them with the utmost marks of freedom, tenderness and friendship, to convince them that your sentiments of doctrine (tho' opposite to theirs) create in you no disaffection to them; however theirs may render them disaffected to you.—(4.) Endeavour to make them sensible of the much greater importance of those things in which you agree with them; and press them powerfully on their consciences: and when they once come to feel the weight and force of these, they will gradually abate of their zeal for lesser things. And this is the only (at least the best and safest) way to convince them, that these things on which they have misplaced their zeal are to be reckoned amongst the *minutiae* of divinity; for nothing is more natural and common, than for the mind to raise the importance of a subject, in proportion to the zeal it expresses for it. Otherwise it would lye under the constant self-reproach of being governed by a blind irregular zeal. And as their zeal for any particular doctrine has fixed the importance of it, before their understanding has precisely weighed it, to go about to argue against that importance would be to argue

argue against their zeal, i. e. their passions; which is a very unequal encounter, and altogether vain—(5.) Take occasion often to expose the effects of bigotry in other instances to their view, whereby they may possibly become sensible of their own. But let the instances be so distant, (or if near so artfully insinuated) that they may not be sensible of your design—(6.) Come as near to their sentiments as you possibly can, (when your subject leads you that way) and shew them the plain reason why you cannot come nearer—(Lastly) Refer all to plain Scripture, and resolve to adhere to that, both for the confirmation of doctrine, and the confutation of error; and by removing their mistaken sense of Scripture, open to them the first source of the errors they have imbibed.

(3.) What is a right conduct towards those that are inclined to infidelity?

(1.) As these are but bigots of another rank, they must be treated with the same tenderness, caution and prudence. The latitudinarian and narrow bigot will be equally enflamed by a violent opposition; for they both lay an equal claim to superior wisdom, and eagerly demand (what if you would

would keep them in humour you must not be backward to pay) some compliment to their own understanding—But (2.) as these are the great champions of Reason, and will admit of no other weapon in the hand of their antagonist, be sure to be expert at that, and insist upon it that your adversary uses no other; i. e. that he do not put you off with sophistry, paralogism, illusion, equivocation, ridicule, buffoonery, clamour, confidence, passion, or grimace, instead of solid argument and plain reason. Keep him to his point. Admit nothing but what you understand; and nothing but what he understands himself: And take care he do not entangle you in a wood of words, or blind your eyes with dust, or prevent your seeing distinctly the point in hand by holding a cloud before it; or lead you from it by diverting to another subject, when he is pinched and piqued by an argument he cannot answer.—(3.) If your adversary be a person of sense, learning and ingenuity, the most effectual method to draw him to your opinion, is by a strong appeal to those good qualities, whereby he will convince himself.—(4.) If his self-conceit be unsufferable, and his ignorance

norance ridiculous, it may not be amiss sometimes to mortify the former by exposing the latter.—(5.) Insist upon it, that if his regard and esteem for natural religion be sincere, that will engage him to think favourably of the christian institution, which has refined and exalted morality to it's utmost perfection; that there is no honest deist (whatever he believes) but would heartily wish christianity to be true.

—(Lastly.) If you observe him capable of serious impressions, urge him to consider seriously the dreadful risque he runs whilst he pawns his immortal soul upon it that christianity is an imposture; and how unavoidable his ruin, whilst he continues wilfully to neglect it: Because, if christianity be true, the sentence of condemnation denounced against him (by the Great Author of it) for resolving not to believe it, must be also true. Vid. *John* iii. 36.

(4.) How should we conduct ourselves as faithful and judicious ministers towards melancholy, dejected and doubting christians. As this is a frequent case and often attended with no small difficulty; I shall consider it more particularly.

The (1.) thing to be considered, is the true source and original of this melancholy gloom and dejection of mind: Whether it arises from bodily disorder; worldly losses and afflictions; some grievous sin committed; or from an excessive apprehensiveness and timidity of spirit. Perhaps the person himself may impute it to none of these, but either to the divine desertion, or the buffetings of Satan. But these must carefully be distinguished and explained, because they are frequently mistaken; and then, according to the true source of their spiritual trouble must be your advice and address to them.

If you have reason to believe that the troubled state of their mind is owing principally to a bodily disorder, or some obstruction, or dyscracy of the animal fluids, you should recommend to them a physician, or prescribe them physick, the cold bath, constant employment, or exercise in the air (c.)

If

(c) The greater part of those that think they are troubled in mind, are melancholy hypocondriacal people, who,

If their sorrow or settled melancholy of mind be the effect of some worldly losses and afflictions, you must endeavour all you can to alleviate it, by shewing them how many ways God can (if he pleases) make up to them the loss they have sustained; how many wise and kind ends may be answered by it; that the scenes of life are variable: After night comes the day. Beseech them to put their hope and trust in God as a gracious and indulgent Father; and urge every topick of consolation proper to be used in a time of worldly adversity.

If the disconsolate state of their mind be the effect of a melancholy constitution, the case is still more difficult, and belongs rather to the physician's department than that of the minister. The latter can have but small hope of administering any proper relief, because the person is not  
capable

who, what through some false opinions in religion, what through a foulness of blood, occasioned by their unactive course of life, in which their minds work too much, because their bodies are too little employed, fall into dark and cloudy apprehensions; of which they can give no clear nor good account. Burnet's *Past. Care*, p. 199.

capable of reasoning or thinking justly, and there is something within him that obstructs the avenues to his heart; which must first be removed, before comfort can find its way to it. All that can be done in this case, is to persuade him if you can (of what he will find it very hard to believe) that he sees every thing in a wrong light, and is not at present a competent judge in his own case; and therefore ought not believe his thoughts. Ask him if he never judged more favourably of his spiritual state heretofore than he does now; and whether he was not a more capable judge of his case then, than he is now.

If the trouble of his mind arise from the reproaches of conscience for some grievous sin committed, your way is then more direct and plain. If you have reason to believe that this sorrow of heart is the effect of a true penitential remorse, you are then to lay before him every proper topick of consolation the gospel admits, *viz.* the riches of the divine mercy, the merits of the blood of Christ, the extent and efficacy of free grace, the precious promises of the gospel,

pel, and the examples of God's mercy and wonderful compassion to humble penitents; and conclude all with an earnest exhortation to trust his soul in the hands of Christ, and to rely on the mercy of God in the way of a steady conscientious obedience.

If it arise from an excessive apprehensiveness and timidity of spirit, and you have cause to believe the person's state is much better than he fears, you are then to fortify and encourage his heart, by referring him to his own past experience of what God has done for his soul; the various tokens of his favour to him in the former scenes of life, and in the several methods of his grace and providence. Urge upon him the exercise of a lively faith encouraged by the grace of the gospel; and convince him, that it is no less wrong and prejudicial for a person to think too ill than to think too well of himself: that as he is in no danger at all of the latter, advise him for the honour of God, the credit of religion, and his own peace and comfort, to guard against the former, where his greatest danger lies. Again,

H

If

If the melancholy and dejected soul have a pious turn, and imputes his present darkness to what he calls divine dereliction, or the hidings of God's face, explain that affair to him; and tell him, that his want of that spiritual joy and comfort he once found in his soul may be owing to other causes; the present low state of his spirits, a distemperature of the animal frame, the influence of external objects and accidents, or a concurrence of all these: that nothing is more variable than the frame of the human mind: that we are not to think that God's regards to his own children vary with that; this is a great mistake, and a mistake that is greatly dishonourable to him; that whilst he sees them upright, sincere, humble, obedient and dependant, his regards to them are always the same, whatever they may think of him; that God never hides his face from his people, till they withdraw their hearts from him; that unless they forsake him he will never depart from them; that the hidings of God's countenance (which the *Psalmist* so often complains of) generally if not always refer to the external dis-  
penstation

pensations of God, or outward providential afflictions, not inward spiritual desertions; when the distress of his circumstances was so great that God might seem to have forgotten and forsaken him, and his enemies might be ready to put that construction upon it.

Lastly, If the person imputes the trouble of his mind to the buffetings of Satan, explain that affair to him. Let him know, that tho' in some cases that evil spirit may have an agency in creating some spiritual troubles, yet he has no more power over the mind than what it pleases God to give him; that his influence (be it what it will) is controuled and limited; that the most he can do is, to suggest sinful and troublesome thoughts, which we may and ought to repel: that the Holy Spirit has a counter-agency to inspire good and holy affections: that by indulging to excessive grief and gloomy apprehensions, we give the devil the advantage over us, and even invite his temptations: and finally we ought to take special care to distinguish between the agency of Satan and the operation of natural causes; and not im-

pute those things to the devil, which are owing to our own folly and weakness, or are the physical effects of external objects.

(5.) What is a right conduct towards the licentious and profane?

(1.) Whilst you behave towards them with civility and discretion, it will be adviseable to decline a particular intercourse with them. A minister's behaviour towards men should in a good degree be regulated by their moral characters—(2.) In case they seek your more intimate friendship by kind and benevolent offices, so that gratitude and good manners will not permit you to forbear your visits, you will then have a fair opportunity of insinuating some necessary and gentle admonitions; either by way of story, simile, repartee, railing, or reproof suitable to the subject of the discourse or the temper they may be in: which (if it take effect) will prepare your way for a more free and close remonstrance—(3.) Always open a way to the heart on that side where you find the easiest access. Some are most touched with

with a sense of honour, and a regard to their reputation; others with a view to their interest; others must be allured by an easy, gentle, rational address; and others will yield to nothing but close and warm reproof: but take particular care to know the ruling passion of the person you address, and, if possible, to bring that over to your side—(4.) Beg of them to erect their hopes, and extend their views as rational beings designed for an immortal existence, and not forget their connexion with another world; for to provide only for the present, and live from hand to mouth, is to act far below the dignity and design of human nature—

(5.) If they have any taste for reading, put into their hands such books as are most suited to their capacity, taste and character—(Lastly.) you should frequently address them from the pulpit. But your publick address (while it is strong and animated) must be general, and have nothing in it that is distinguishing or appropriative; that the audience may have no room to think that any one person is particularly intended in the animadversion; for tho'

they will bear to be preached *to*, yet no man loves to be preached *at*.

(6.) How are we to behave towards the grossly ignorant and careless?

(1.) Endeavour to rouse them to a sense of religion and their dependence on God, by a seasonable improvement of some awakening providences; e. g. their own fickness, or worldly disappointments; the death of a friend, or some publick calamity—(2.) Represent to them the most important and affecting subjects of religion, in the strongest light and plainest language: e. g. the shortness of time; the awfulness of eternity; the certainty and near approach of death; and the terrors of the final judgment—

(3.) If you find that your conversation is agreeable to them, frequently visit them in a free and friendly manner; and take care that there be nothing dogmatical or authoritative in the advice you give them: but let all appear to proceed from a compassionate concern you have for the interest of their souls—

(4.) As they are but children in understanding, they must be dealt with as such:

put

put the plainest and most affecting books into their hands; and take care you do not feed them with strong meat, when they stand in need of milk—

(5.) It will not be amiss in some part of your sermon (especially in the application) to adapt yourself in particular to their capacity and condition, that they may not only understand but feel what you say; for these sort of hearers (both amongst the high and low) perhaps make a much larger part of our audience than we imagine.

(7.) What is a proper behaviour towards those who are superior to us in rank and fortune?

(1.) Readily pay them the respect due to their distinction and character. If their temper and conduct be not altogether such as you could wish, yet that will not excuse you from a civil, decent and obliging behaviour towards them. You must remember your duty to others, however they may be deficient in theirs to you. But if they treat you with kindness, friendship and affection, they claim your gratitude, honour, and esteem; which will prompt

your endeavours to oblige and serve them every way you can—But (2.) be free, open, conversable, and discreetly unre-served before them. Absence of mind, distance of behaviour, formality of address, stiffness of manner, or affected silence is always ungenteel and disgusting; and especially in the presence of superiors—

(3.) Preserve a generosity and manli-ness of temper and address; and shew no-thing of a mean, low, timid, servile spirit; that is not only dishonourable to your own character, but infers a bad compli-ment on theirs. They are not tyrants; nor if they were, must you submit to be their slaves. And remember, that if they are sensible and genteel, wise and good, they will consider their superiority to you in one respect, as balanced by that of yours to them, in another; theirs may be most shewy, but perhaps yours may be most valuable—(4.) Forget not the dig-nity and decorum of your character. There is something you owe to that, as well as to the distinction and opulence of your friends. And while this is your guard against incidental levities and a compliance with sinful customs, 'tis by

no means inconsistent with pure wit, innocent humour, and seasonable cheerfulness: which, if attended with good sense and an obliging natural behaviour, will be no less agreeable in the company of your superiors, than in that of your equals.

—(5.) Do and say all the obliging and agreeable things you can, consistent with truth and conscience and the honour of your function. And then (6.)—Take every opportunity of insinuating something (conformable to the duty of your office) which may be serviceable to their spiritual interest, and helpful to their moral character—(Lastly,) make a prudent and seasonable use of your interest in them, for the relief of your poor neighbours; whose distresses may be better known to you, than they are to them.

(8.) What is the proper behaviour of a minister towards the poor of his congregation?

This must be regulated by their moral character. (1.) If their character be immoral or profane, as they will not be very fond

fond of your company, they will take no offence if you forbear to visit them; but they should not be wholly neglected. Genteel, kind and candid reproof, prudently and seasonably given, may have a good effect when they come to reflect upon it coolly: and a seasonable relief to them in their distress will add weight to your admonitions, and will give them such impressions of your charity, as will better dispose them to receive your instructions —— But (2.) if they be serious and well-inclined, and you find yourself agreeable to them, you should frequently call upon them; and though your visits be short, they should free, friendly, condescending and courteous; and always leave with them some spiritual, moral, or religious instruction, suited to their taste, understanding and circumstances. Be ready to advise and help them in every thing you can. If you see a good heart at bottom, and especially a humble spirit, make the greatest allowance for their ignorance, prepossession, or infelicity of temper: and when there is need of reproof, let it be preceded by the sincerest expressions of love,

love, and by real acts of friendship. If they are willing to open the state of their souls to you, attend to it with patience and care, that you may administer the most suitable advice and comfort.—Have a particular regard to their capacity in your publick exhortations. *To the poor the gospel was preached.* And as these sometimes make up the bulk of a congregation, and their soul stands as much in need of spiritual nourishment, as those of greater knowledge and comprehension, they should be always fed with food convenient for them.

(Lastly.) In what manner ought a minister to behave towards those who have fallen into notorious sins?

This must be regulated by the disposition, character and temper of the offender. The sensible and penitent must be treated one way, the obstinate and impenitent another. The following method in general will perhaps be found to be the most prudent and effectual.

(1.) Previous to all reproof should be a circumstantial knowledge of the fact

fact you reprove. (2.) Be sure that it be criminal or indiscreet, and that the person guilty, is or ought to be sensible of it: for if you reprove him for what he is not guilty of, or what he is not sensible there is any harm in, he will probably retort upon you the charge of censoriousness. If there be guilt and indiscretion in his conduct, and he not sensible of it, your busines then is to convince him of it; and how much injury he may do his character by inadvertently allowing those things as fit and innocent, which are not so in him. And let your arguments in proof of the guilt be taken from the circumstances of the fact; the character and relation he bears in life; the opinion of wise and judicious men; the nature of things; and the testimony of scripture. And then (3.) See that your reproofs be not too severe. I don't mean more severe than the offender would chuse, but more severe than the nature and circumstances of the case require; or more severe than is necessary for the justification of your

your fidelity, and the reformation of the sinner.

Too great severity towards tender minds does more harm than good. See *Gal. vi. 1.* ‘*Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted (d.)*’——(4.) Take care lest, through a fear of offending your brother, you do not offend God by a want of faithfulness. ‘*Prov. xxvii. 6. Faithful are the wounds of a friend.*’ ‘Tis the greatest piece of friendship you can do him, and if he is wise he will think it so, and more highly esteem you for it. ‘*Psal. cxli. 5. Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness;*’——(5.) Let your reproof appear to flow from your love to him, and be administered with the utmost tenderness and wisdom

(d) Οὐ γὰρ απλῶς, &c. You must not only proportion your reproofs to the nature of the offence, but to the disposition of the offender; lest while you mean to heal the breach, you make the rent worse; and in rectifying one fault, occasion a greater.

Chrysostom de Sacerdotio, l. 2. p. 150:

wisdom (e). Lastly.) Leave not your offending brother without proper directions for a better conduct.

(r) There may be ways fallen upon of reproving the worst men in so soft a manner, that if they are not reclaimed, they shall not be irritated or made worse by it; which is but too often the effect of an indiscreet reproof. By this a minister may save the sinner's soul; he is at least sure to save his own, by having discharged his duty towards his people.

Burnet's *Pastoral Care*, p. 194.



C H A P.

CHAP. IX.

*Concerning the difficulties a minister must expect to meet with in the execution of his office; and his proper support and encouragement under them.*

SOME of these may arise,

(1.) From your own natural temper, which may render you indisposed or unapt to some particular parts of the ministerial office—But the most difficult duties by becoming a habit, become easy.

(2.) No small difficulty may arise from the resolution and labour requisite to put some of the fore-mentioned rules into execution—But this difficulty will in like manner diminish as this course becomes habitual. ‘ In all other professions, those who follow them, labour in them all the year long; and are hard at their business every day of the week: and shall

‘ shall ours only, that is the noblest of all others, make the labouring in our business an objection against any part of our duty?’ (f).’ And in proportion as our heart is engaged in the work, the difficulty of it will grow less, and our delight in it greater.

(3.) Another discouragement may arise from the seeming singularity of this character; and the general neglect which ministers of all denominations discover of the duties belonging to the sacred function: what you do out of conscience they may impute to affectation; which instead of procuring their esteem, may create their envy.—But ‘tis a *small matter to be condemned in the day that man judgeth you*, since you will be acquitted another day, when he that *judgeth you will be the Lord*; which is the proper import of that passage, 1 Cor. iv. 4. Or,

(4.) From the little success you meet with, notwithstanding all your most earnest endeavours to promote the spiritual interest, and eternal happiness of mankind.—

(f) *Burnet's Pastoral Care*, p. 207.

kind—But your future acceptance and reward will not be in proportion to the success, but the sincerity of your endeavours (g).

(5.) Your own weakness and infirmities both of body and mind, may throw fresh discouragements in your way—But these will be graciously allowed for; and God requires of none more than they have received. If we have received but one talent, he does not expect so much from us, as from those on whom he has bestowed ten.

(6.) The ministerial character itself may subject you to the contempt of some profane men—But if you adorn it by the useful, upright conversation before described, 'tis great odds but you secure their esteem and respect; if not, their continued contempt is your real honour.

(7.) From the different tempers, tastes, dispositions and opinions of the people—But how you are to behave with regard to these has been shewn before; and no

I small

(g) Vid. Id. p. 212, 213.

small degree of prudence is required in this case (h).

In a word, every view of the nature, difficulty and dignity of your office, may furnish you with a proper motive and direction to a right behaviour in it (i). No valuable end can be pursued without some obstruction, nor obtained without some difficulty. Your employment is truly honourable and important; and your encouragement, advantage and assistance, more than equal to the labour it requires. If you be found faithful you shall not fail of a distinguished recompence, from the bountiful hand of that Good Master in whose service you are engaged. And a careful observation and practice of those rules of pastoral

(b) *Nunc si reputemus in eodem populo, quanta sit varietas sextuum, ætatum, cœditionis, ingeniorum, opinionum, vitæ, institutionis, consuetudinis, quantâ oportet esse prædictum prudentiâ ecclesiasticen, cui sit temperanda oratio!* Erasm. Eccle. p. 36.

(i) *Ab humi repentibus curis erigat animum tuum, considerata functionis dignitas: a prevaricatione deterreret delegantis severitas: Socordiam excludat suscepti muneris difficultas: Industriam ac vigilantiam extimulet præmii magnitudo, quod non ab hominibus, sed a Deo erit expectandum,* Id. p. 193.

storal conduct before laid down, will (by the blessing of God) at once adorn your character, increase your honour, exalt your present joy, and enhance your future reward (k).

(k) Quam lætitiam, quam exultationem, quod repudium credimus esse in pectore fidelis ecclesiastæ, dum repeatat quot animas ipsius ministerio, dominus, satanæ tyrannidi subtractas sibi vindicarit! Erasm. Eccle. p. 14.

17 JU 71

F I N I S.



Lately Publish'd by the same Author.

I. **T**HE Lord's-Day Evening Entertainment, containing Fifty-two practical Discourses on the most serious and important Subjects in Divinity; intended for the Use of Families. In 4 Vols. the second Edition. Price neatly bound 18s.

II. Self Knowledge, a Treatise shewing the *Nature* and *Benefit* of that *Important Science*, and the *Way* to attain it; intermixed with various Reflections and Observations on Human Nature. The fifth Edition Octavo; Price bound 4s.

III. The same Book in 12mo. Price 2s.

IV. A Letter to a Friend upon his Entrance on the Ministerial Office, Price 6d.

V. An Essay on Elocution, or Pronunciation. Intended chiefly for the Assistance of those who instruct others in the Art of Reading. And of those who are often called to speak in Publick. The Second Edition. Price 6d.

VI. An Essay on the Power of Numbers, and the Principles of Harmony in Poetical Compositions. Price 1s.

VII. An Essay on the Power and Harmony of Prosaic Numbers: Being a Sequel to one on the Power of Numbers and the Principles of Harmony in Poetic Compositions. Price 1s.

VIII. A plain and modest Plea for *Christianity*; or a sober and rational Appeal to *Infidels*: Occasioned by a Perusal of some of their late Productions, particularly a Treatise intitled, *Christianity not founded on Argument*. Price 1s.

